

ANDREW COLE

# Literature and Heresy

in the Age  
of Chaucer



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## LITERATURE AND HERESY IN THE AGE OF CHAUCER

After the late fourteenth century, English literature was fundamentally shaped by the heresy of John Wyclif and his followers. This study demonstrates how Geoffrey Chaucer, William Langland, John Clanvowe, Margery Kempe, Thomas Hoccleve and John Lydgate, far from eschewing Wycliffism out of fear of censorship or partisan distaste, viewed Wycliffite ideas as a distinctly new intellectual resource. Andrew Cole offers the only complete historical account of the first official condemnation of Wycliffism – the Blackfriars Council of 1382 – and the fullest study of “Lollardy” as a social and literary construct. Drawing on literary criticism, history, theology, and law, he presents not only a fresh perspective on late medieval literature, but also an invaluable rethinking of the Wycliffite heresy. *Literature and Heresy* restores Wycliffism to its proper place as the most significant context for late medieval English writing, and thus for the origins of English literary history.

ANDREW COLE is Assistant Professor of English at the University of Georgia.

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*For my parents,  
Bill and Joan Cole*



We have to look for new words about God which express the old faith because we have to argue with heretics. Aquinas

You can destroy spontaneity and produce a literature which is orthodox but feeble, or you can let people say what they choose and take the risk that some of them will utter heresies. Orwell

The constructive use of riches is better than their possession.  
Fortune Cookie, Golden Sun Restaurant, Athens, GA

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## *Preface*

This book intervenes in a field that is as old as the earliest English literary biographers, such as John Bale and John Leland, and as new as the spate of recent work coming from scholars in departments of history, theology, philosophy, literature, and language.<sup>1</sup> The field concerns the study of late medieval English heresy, and the heresy in question is Wycliffism, a reformist movement oriented around the teachings of the Oxford theologian John Wyclif (d.1384). Wyclif and his followers sought great changes in the church's sacramental practices and ecclesiastical structures. They insisted, for example, that the eucharist – by far the most important of devotional forms – was needlessly mystified by the church. Specifically, they claimed that the church rationalized its own power by obscuring the significance and symbolism of the sacrament as Jesus had intended it in the Gospels: a sign of his imminent and lasting sacrifice, and not a priestly legerdemain that produces Christ's bloody, crucified body under the appearance of bread to be consumed in Mass. They also argued that the church was mesmerized by temporalities – worldly possessions, episcopal palaces, accumulated livings – and that the only way to bring that institution to a recognition of its spiritual charge would be to effect its complete disendowment at the hands of the secular arm, redistributing its resources to the poor and into the foundation of new grammar schools and universities. It comes hardly as a shock, then, that the church adjudged these and other teachings to be heretical and erroneous at a provincial synod in 1382, the Blackfriars Council – a modern name in reference to the location of the Council itself at the Blackfriars house in London. After this public condemnation, and from the mid-1380s on, many persons attacked Wycliffites in English and Latin sermons, poems, and prose texts by dismantling their ideas and calling their adherents “lollards” – a neologism to England that loosely meant “heretic.” Yet despite all these attempts to quash Wycliffism, it was influential in an oddly unique way: somehow this academic heresy became popular from

the mid-1380s on, spreading with increasing diversity among the peasantry and gentry alike. Wycliffite ideas were finding more and more expression in religious books written in English, as opposed to Latin. On account of the continued influence of Wycliffism among the laity, the church – specifically, successive archbishops of Canterbury – sought further measures to eradicate it, inaugurating the fifteenth century with morbid business: the execution by burning of a priest accused of eucharistic heresy, William Sawtre, in 1401. That ultimate penalty, which would be applied numerous times over the course of the fifteenth and early sixteenth century, marked the beginning of the end of what some rightly call the “premature reformation.”<sup>o</sup>

Our summary of Wycliffism can stop here, for much of it will be challenged in this book – from the scholarly consensus about the first important ecclesiastical response to this heresy, the Blackfriars Council, to the very word used to harass Wycliffites in medieval England but still employed transparently by modern scholars as if it had little ideological, much less theological, significance: “lollard.”<sup>2</sup> Indeed, this book offers a series of interventions on a number of topics within Middle English studies, including questions concerning the genesis of heretical identities out of the dialectic of the accuser and the accused (Chapters 1, 2, 3), the gray areas between orthodoxy and heterodoxy (Chapter 3), the limits of censorship and the politics of the vernacular (Chapters 1, 4, 5, 7), the importance of affective forms (Chapter 7), and the afterlife of Wycliffism within English literary history (Epilogue). Yet this book also presents some unnoticed literary, typological, and hermeneutic features of Wycliffism through a study of non-Wycliffite authors: William Langland, Geoffrey Chaucer, Thomas Hoccleve, John Lydgate, and Margery Kempe. The rationale for bringing together such a diverse set of writers is to fill a critical need: most of the work on late medieval English dissent, especially that which appears in monographs, either sidelines Wycliffism for the sake of continental traditions of prophetic dissent or views it as a subset of larger cultural problems.<sup>3</sup> Those studies that do focus specifically on dissent largely explore authors who are canonically minor within the teaching and, for the most part, research of English literature.<sup>4</sup> These are all important studies that have shaped the field, and there is no artificial charge here that such work should have been focused elsewhere. Rather, the canonical focus of this book encourages an opening out of questions about the relevance of Wycliffism to literary culture and, as I conclude in my Epilogue, to literary history – a relevance doubted by a number of scholars outside of Wycliffite studies looking in and asking, Why

Wycliffism? Have we not heard enough about “lollards”? The total argument of this book is that each author studied here supplies strikingly different angles from which to view Wycliffism as an ideologically diverse and aesthetically enabling feature of late medieval literary culture and politics. *Literature and Heresy* will not assess these authors’ “response” to Wycliffism, which inevitably is a passive kind of claim involving Wycliffites who act and others who react, a claim undergirded by the mistaken idea that Wycliffism was somehow “outside” of mainstream literary and interpretive communities. Rather, it will seek to discover the making of Wycliffism and “lollardy” in the hands of authors who adopted Wycliffite terms and ideas that in many cases – such as Langland’s – then became a cultural norm. In such appropriations can we see that Wycliffism, in its own right and by its influences, is one of the central forces that shaped English literary history.

The prevailing historical method of this book will involve what is perhaps an unfashionable kind of reading, given the recent tendency in criticism to dissolve periodizing distinctions between medieval and Renaissance, whereby continuities trump ruptures and become in themselves grand narratives. What I offer here instead is an argument for a certain “break” in late medieval writing – not in the effort to supply my own narrative about a fundamentally new historical period but rather to offer a more modest account that loosely conforms to what Fredric Jameson proposes as “a break without a period” – a way of assessing what is new in a given historic moment without rushing to announce larger periodizing ideas about what is “medieval,” proto-modern, or even modern about a given set of texts or cultural practices.<sup>5</sup> I argue that when Wycliffism appeared in late medieval England, writers began to engage older topics in new ways, conferring onto the resulting literatures an indelibly post-Wycliffite character. Each author in this study offers testimony to that claim. In researching this book, I began with those pressing diachronic questions ranging from the history of mysticism to the history of translation theory, antifraternalism, and canon law and heresy persecutions – to name but a few examples. My considerations of these large topics are available both in the main text of this book and in the notes, but the diachronic evidence always in my mind pointed to the *difference* between an earlier, pre-Wycliffite moment and the one under study here – the post-Wycliffite age of the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries. The relevance of Wycliffism asserts itself most forcefully through its difference and novelty, and such novelty in late medieval England was often seen as “heresy” and castigated in terms that attempt to mollify the shock of the new.<sup>6</sup>



It should take no special pleading or argumentative periodizing to suggest that Wycliffism brings something new to late medieval writing that would not have been possible at a prior moment, before Wycliffism. Oftentimes, however, it does require constant positioning and qualification when arguing about – say – a Wycliffite influence in Chaucer. For it is so often the case that an objector stands up to ask, “Are you saying Chaucer is a ‘lollard’?” Let it be understood here that my goal is not to out any literary great as a “lollard,” and, as will be clear in the discussion of “lollardy” below, the question itself is tiresomely simplistic and tangential. My task in this book is to end the special pleading and nuance the questions we ask. It is to open things up and posit the necessity of Wycliffism to the English literary canon. Indeed, this book shows that the authors who comprise not only our canon but the late medieval canons as well (Langland, Chaucer, Lydgate, Hoccleve, especially, were all popular authors) must be read in the Wycliffite context for us to gain a fuller understanding of the topics they explore in their works and the literary, intellectual, and ethical stakes in writing them. This book also recommends that we change our critical terminology in discussing English heresy and cease using a term that is both ideologically problematic and nostalgic – “lollard.” As will be immediately obvious, my use of the terms “lollard” and “Wycliffite” departs from professional conventions (which see these terms as synonyms) on the conviction that the historical evidence suggests different meanings for each. If my phraseology, such as “Langlandian ‘lollardy’” or “Geoffrey Chaucer’s Wycliffite text,” produces an estrangement effect long enough for us to rethink our critical paradigms and seek new ways to think about Wycliffism and its influence, then that is the most one can ask for.

This book begins with a foundational episode in English politics and religion – something of an originary moment for Wyclif and his followers, whose assorted views were condemned as heresy: the Blackfriars Council of 1382. There are many introductions to Wycliffism dealing with this event, and an infinite number of references to this Council in Middle English studies. Yet the plurality of studies and references has led to a narrowing familiarity with this Council and, consequently, has either mystified its political and legal implications or reduced them to one buzz word: censorship. The first chapter, therefore, offers what has long been needed in historical and literary scholarship – a description of how Archbishop William Courtenay used the resources of his administration to bring the Wycliffite heresy to national attention. Chapter 2 explores Langland’s relation to the most visible form of anti-Wycliffite polemic in

the wake of the Blackfriars Council – namely, the discourse of “lollardy.” Langland, I argue, ranks among the first authors to neutralize this polemic and offer in the C text of *Piers Plowman* what remains the most searching case study of “lollardy” as a construct and social form. In Chapter 3, this investigation continues with an assessment of the poet’s relationship to the Wycliffite appropriation of “lollardy,” whereby the typology of the “lollard” becomes idealized and shared among a number of Wycliffite and non-Wycliffite authors alike. Chapter 4 evaluates the Wycliffite significances of Chaucerian vernacularity. In arguing that Chaucer was a close reader of a specific Wycliffite text on translation, this chapter considers some adjacent but important questions. Did the Blackfriars Council place a pall upon vernacular writing itself? Did the authorities consider English writing as inherently heretical such that non-Wycliffite authors feared retribution from censors if they chose English as their medium? After surveying the evidence, I answer “no” and elaborate on this claim by discussing how Chaucer’s circle presented the poet opportunities to read and cite English Wycliffite texts with impunity.

Chapters 5 and 6, on Hoccleve and Lydgate respectively, turn to later ecclesiastical (and secular) events. Chapter 5 reassesses Hoccleve’s relation to two major persecutions in the fifteenth century – the burning of John Badby in 1410 (the first layperson to be executed for eucharistic heresy) and the trial of Sir John Oldcastle in 1413, the subsequent hunt for the escaped heretic, and his execution in 1417. Hoccleve, it will be argued, differs from the legal and chronicle publications that portray these events as orthodox triumphs. Engagingly, he cites but revises the public record about the trials and persecutions of Wycliffites and, in so doing, assumes postures of pity and mercy that are authentically sympathetic with Wycliffism but foreclosed in the recorded orthodox staging of these trials. Chapter 6 attends to Lydgate’s handling of the most problematic theological issue of his day – the eucharist – and shows that the poet explores the possibilities of eucharistic theology by rejecting the mainstream, juridically orthodox interpretation and adapting a uniquely historically informed model that reasserts the relevance of form and figural interpretation. The final chapter on Margery Kempe brings this book nearly full circle, returning us to the issues of Chapters 2 and 3 – “lollardy” – but viewing this typology as an affective form. Kempe embraces the identity of the persecuted “lollard” in order to make salient her own affective investments in being “shamed” for Christ through persecution. This chapter then moves to expand these affective considerations in an examination of what is perhaps the most topically loaded

moment in the *Book*: Kempe's encounter with the former Wycliffite, Bishop Philip Repingdon. Kempe appears to be fascinated by Repingdon, whose own status as a recanted heretic serves as an example of how the categories of orthodoxy and heterodoxy can be productively fused and intentionally confused within a larger discourse of shame.

Collectively, these chapters suggest that the major anti-Wycliffite persecutions from the Blackfriars Council to the burning of Badby, to Archbishop Thomas Arundel's Constitutions, do not produce the cultural effects we would assume – a dampening down of ideas, a disinterest in vernacularity, and a quashing of experimentation in theology and literary form. Indeed, much of the evidence suggests that the major ecclesiastical and secular initiatives against Wycliffism did not succeed as planned and in some instances had the opposite effect of making this heresy an item of great and lasting interest.

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## Abbreviations

- EWS*     *English Wycliffite Sermons*, 5 vols., ed. Anne Hudson and Pamela Gradon. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983–96.
- FZ*     *Fasciculi Zizaniorum Magistri Johannis Wyclif cum Tritico*, ed. Walter Waddington Shirley. London: Longman *et al.*, 1858.
- MED*     *The Middle English Dictionary*, ed. Hans Kurath *et al.* Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1956–2007.
- OED*     *The Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd edn. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989.
- PL*     *Patrologia Cursus Completus: Series Latina*, ed. J. P. Migne. 221 vols. Paris, 1844–64.

### NOTE

References to the Vulgate Bible are from *Biblia Sacra: Iuxta Vulgatam Versionem*, 3rd edn., ed. Robert Weber (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1983), with translations from Challoner's text, *The Holy Bible* (Baltimore, MD: F. Lucas, Jr., 1837).

PART I

*The invention of heresy*





*The Blackfriars Council, London, 1382*

And so monye traveylon in veyn to wyte how heretykis schulden be  
knowone. anon. Wycliffite preacher<sup>1</sup>

A book on heresy and late medieval literature must deal immediately with a problem – namely, that it appears counter-intuitive to claim that authors would engage in any positive fashion with a heresy that was publicly and frequently deemed to be scandalous and, eventually, punishable by death. In handling what is fundamentally an historical problem, we are required to think historically and revisit that momentous occasion, 17–21 May 1382, when the Blackfriars Council in London condemned as heretical and erroneous twenty-four distinct ideas or conclusions that were advanced by a group of scholars at Oxford University. Literary critics have viewed this event as a defining moment for late medieval writing with the understanding that the Blackfriars Council is synonymous with literary censorship. After the ruling of the Council, so the thinking commonly goes, authors policed themselves, making sure that their statements about the church, its ministers, and its sacraments, would not draw notice to themselves – lest the authorities, in wishing to silence anything short of utter orthodoxy, step in and persecute these authors as heretics.<sup>2</sup>

William Langland has become the case in point. James Simpson, who has offered a compelling exploration of the intersection between ecclesiastical initiatives and late medieval writing, concludes that “royal and ecclesiastical legislation against slanderous rumour and heresy, as spoken or written, certainly did exist in the period spanning” 1378 to 1401. “We can go further and say,” Simpson continues, “that the 30 years or so from 1378 witnessed the increasing intensity of such legislation. *Piers Plowman* B stands, that is, on the borders of a period of active repression.”<sup>3</sup> Langland, he suggests, wrote within a context that put “constraints” on his satire, keeping him from exploring issues, Wycliffite or otherwise, that the church condemned. Simpson considers a range of ecclesiastical pronouncements including but not limited to those of the Blackfriars Council, and he seeks

to be provisional in his conclusions, but the upshot – especially in work after Simpson – is that ecclesiastical proclamations govern the poet's reflections on theological topics. Kathryn Kerby-Fulton, for instance, amplifies Simpson's conclusion about "a period of active repression" in arguing that Langland revised his poem with the Blackfriars condemnations in mind:<sup>4</sup> "the creeping political and ecclesiastical intimidation . . . limited what he felt able to say on the subject of socio-political oppression and clerical abuse."<sup>5</sup> And what goes for Langland goes for all: "everyone associated with a censored work – author, publisher, even (in cases of heresy) an individual reader – could be punished by the authorities."<sup>6</sup> These are important contributions to Langland scholarship, but they seem to assume that the publication of ecclesiastical pronouncements wishing for uniform orthodoxy is the same as the enforcement of said pronouncements – a rare kind of enforcement that typically involves a committee of theologians tasked to read the usually academic writing of a single author (not groups of authors) to make sure it hews to theological correctness.<sup>7</sup> Enactment is not enforcement, in other words, nor is it an "illocutionary act" in which the saying is the doing (as we will see below, the saying is always in excess of the doing). Yet with such a generalized sense about the Blackfriars Council and its cultural work, it is not surprising that scholars regard enactment as "active and vigorous prosecution": "In the 1380s, Langland's entire enterprise looks altogether too much like the vernacular theologizing and unauthorized teaching of Scripture against which the ecclesiastical authorities directed not only heightened suspicion, but active and vigorous prosecution," writes Anne Middleton.<sup>8</sup> These critical ideas, it can be acknowledged, are parenthetical to other claims about Langland in context and are largely premised on impressions about what motivates the poet to move toward theological conservatism in each revision of *Piers Plowman* (a view to be questioned in Chapters 2 and 3). All the more reason, then, that a study that looks directly at the Blackfriars Council – its legal strategies, its ambitions, and its cultural work – is in order. Only after such an investigation can we be clear about the Council's impact on late medieval writing, Langlandian or otherwise.

Before I begin, however, it would be helpful to set the parameters of this investigation. My account of the Blackfriars Council omits any extended consideration of the earlier attempts between 1377 and 1381 to condemn Wyclif, chiefly because Wyclif himself was never named in the proceedings at Blackfriars nor was he ever brought to trial during its sessions. Despite the fact that the Council condemned a set of conclusions drawn from his works, it had other fish to fry in the likes of persons at

Oxford who were defending Wyclif and advancing his views. I have omitted a full consideration of these early prosecutions for three other reasons. First, there remains barely any paper trail of these earlier events, besides chroniclers' accounts, which are not only uncorroborated by other primary texts but which at points fuse sources and thus confuse our understanding of what happened.<sup>9</sup> The documents that do survive – such as Pope Gregory XI's 1377 bulls to various English authorities urging them to arrest Wyclif and bring him to trial – themselves color the historical narratives about the heresiarch's casuistry and escape from persecution in these earlier episodes.<sup>10</sup> (Below and in subsequent chapters, I will discuss how chroniclers narrate, redact, or embellish ecclesiastical documents.) Second, owing to the paucity of documents, it seems close to impossible to present new information about Wyclif's travails between this period of time, 1377–1381, besides the helpful accounts already in print to which readers can be referred.<sup>11</sup> Third, and most importantly, the Blackfriars Council of 1382 got right what the earlier attempts got wrong: Archbishop William Courtenay and members of his council figured out a way to overcome the jurisdictional distinctions between church and university that always protected Wyclif, who in his lifetime was never condemned as a heretic. Indeed, they devised a method to attract even the king's attention to a group of Oxford men who were carrying Wyclif's polemic torch. To these events and persons we now turn.

#### WYCLIFFITE PREACHERS REDUX

We may approach the Blackfriars Council knowing that Wycliffism was an academic heresy, based in Oxford, and that this heresy somehow became popular outside of the university. The critical problem was well formulated by James Crompton – how do we “relate an intellectual movement to a popular movement”? – but we may now turn this formulation on its axis and point it to the English Middle Ages and specifically to the work of Archbishop Courtenay.<sup>12</sup> As the former Bishop of London, Courtenay himself was part of the processes after 1377 to stifle Wyclif, and it is his legal methods as archbishop – methods that were perfected after the failures of others – that will be the subject of study here. Here is my thesis: Courtenay understood that the best way to curtail academic heresies, which were up to this point yet another form of inter-faculty dispute at Oxford beyond the intervention of outsiders, would be to approach Wycliffism as extra-university dissent, using the anti-heresy images and ideas found in canon law to render the Oxford Wycliffites as

heretical preachers spreading doctrinal depravities outside of Oxford.<sup>13</sup> By this method, the archbishop brought Wycliffism onto his jurisdictional turf and in the process brought the heresy to what can be called the national attention – “national,” in so far as the condemnation of Wycliffite teachings was circulated in every diocese, posted on church doors, and read out in sermons; “national,” also in the sense that he succeeded in getting the king to issue a mandate against the university and parliament to issue a statute against Wycliffite preachers almost always identified as a core group of Oxonians: Nicholas Hereford, Philip Repingdon, John Aston, and Lawrence Bedeman. Indeed, the success of Courtenay’s strategy to render these Oxford Wycliffites as poisoners of the entire realm can be measured by the enormous claims made by many chroniclers about the utter ubiquity of Wycliffites. Of the year 1382, the very same year of the Blackfriars Council, Henry Knighton observes: “Creuit populus credencium in ista doctrina et quasi germinantes multiplicati sunt nimis et impleuerunt ubique orbem regni, et adeo domestici facti sunt acsi essent de uno die procreati [The numbers believing in those doctrines increased, and as it were bred and multiplied greatly, and they filled the land, and peopled it as though they were begotten in a single day].”<sup>14</sup> Knighton’s contemporaries saw things similarly. One observer explains that in 1382 these Wycliffite preachers were “unto the nowmbre of cc., some prechyng abowte Oxenforde and in diverse cuntres.”<sup>15</sup> Something about Courtenay’s strategies worked in shaping public opinion – particularly the opinion of those who would read the archbishop’s mandates and elaborate on their ambitions, as most of the chroniclers did.

My contribution to our understanding of Archbishop Courtenay’s strategy can be stated specifically against the background of scholarship in history and literature. Scholars agree that the Blackfriars Council met, in large part, to curtail Wycliffite preaching outside the bounds of the university. Versions of this idea characterize the best scholarship on Wycliffism – from H. G. Richardson’s earlier paper on the official responses to Wycliffism to J. H. Dahmus’s *The Persecution of John Wyclif*; from Anne Hudson’s research in “Wycliffism in Oxford 1381–1411” to Jeremy Catto’s substantial contribution to *The History of the University of Oxford*; from A. K. McHardy’s findings in “The Dissemination of Wyclif’s Ideas” to Margaret Aston’s study.<sup>16</sup> All of these opinions were once themselves revisionist in their modification of the earlier claims of H. L. Cannon and H. B. Workman, who held that Wyclif beckoned into Oxford “poor priests” to train in the ways of Wycliffism and send out as evangelical foot soldiers.<sup>17</sup> Yet something of Cannon’s and Workman’s

older theses remains in modern criticism. While we now know that Wyclif's many references to "poor priests" in his sermons and tracts are not motivational speeches for his squads of "lollards" waiting in the wings to do their master's bidding, we still accept that Wyclif's Oxford disciples took their message out of the university on "notorious preaching tours" at a time when they were still comfortably situated there.<sup>18</sup> That opinion has stood as fact largely because scholars have not explored the purposes of, much less challenged the assertions of, the archiepiscopal and episcopal prohibitions (or "inhibitions") against heretical preachers that went out during and after the first important session of the Blackfriars Council. I would submit that the documents related to the Blackfriars Council, even what is left of them, urge us to reconsider precisely how, and why, academic Wycliffism was viewed as a dangerous heresy infecting the realm entire through errant preaching activities. Simply, the documents ought to be read in a way that is attentive to the processes and politics of canon law, the memorability of canonical images and phrases, and major avenues of publication available to ecclesiastical pronouncements.<sup>19</sup> They beg for such a reading.

#### ARCHBISHOP COURTENAY'S HERETICS AND USURPERS

Hardly a day after he received the archiepiscopal pallium, William Courtenay issued a summons on 6 May 1382 calling for a convocation at the Blackfriars (or Dominican) house in London.<sup>20</sup> Bishops, friars from the four orders, doctors of canon and civil law, masters and bachelors of theology from Oxford and Cambridge, and the warden of Merton Hall assembled on 17 May to assess the orthodoxy of twenty-four Wycliffite conclusions – though no person's name was attached to them. On 21 May, the Council determined ten propositions to be heretical, and fourteen to be erroneous. England got its heresy. Courtenay ensured that there would be widespread knowledge about the Wycliffite heresy because, on 30 May, he circulated, through the many channels of publication at his disposal, the signal document that reports on the deliberations at Blackfriars. It is a rhetorically powerful document, as its preamble betrays:

Ecclesiarum praelati circa gregis dominici sibi commissi custodiam eo vigilantius intendere debent, quo lupos intrinsecus, ovium vestimentis indutos, ad rapiendum et dispergendum oves noverint fraudulentius circuire. Sane frequenti clamore et divulgata fama, quod dolentes referimus, ad nostrum pervenit auditum, quod, licet secundum canonicas sanctiones nemo prohibitus, vel non missus, absque sedis apostolicae vel episcopi loci auctoritate sibi praedicationis officium usurpare

debeat publice vel occulte; quidam tamen aeternae damnationis filii, in insaniam mentis producti, sub magnae sanctitatis velamine auctoritatem sibi vendicant praedicandi, ac nonnullas propositiones et conclusiones infrascriptas haereticas, erroneas, atque falsas.<sup>21</sup>

[The prelates of churches in protecting the lord's flock committed to them should endeavor to be watchful for those [eo] who, dressed in sheep's clothing, deceitfully wander about to seize and disperse the sheep. Truly, according to frequent cry and widespread opinion [*fama*], which we address with sorrow, it has come to our attention that, even though according to canonical sanctions no one who is prohibited or not sent ought to usurp to themselves the office of preaching, in public or in private, without the authority of the apostolic see or the bishop of the diocese, some sons of eternal damnation, nevertheless, led by insanity of mind, assume for themselves the right to preach, under pretense of great sanctity, certain propositions and conclusions listed below, heretical, erroneous, and false.]

Alluding to Matthew 7.15 ("adrendite a falsis prophetis qui veniunt ad vos in vestimentis ovium [Beware of false prophets, who come to you in the clothing of sheep]"), Courtenay draws up the memorable figure of the heretic or heretics whose deceptive infamies are known far and wide (*fama*). There is, however, no clearer indication of Courtenay's interest in the canonical definitions of heresy than in the opening claim of his mandate: "according to canonical sanctions no one who is prohibited or not sent ought to usurp to themselves the office of preaching, in public or in private, without the authority of the apostolic see or the bishop of the diocese."<sup>22</sup> Here, Courtenay cites a cliché from canon law about heretics, as found under the title, "De haereticis," of the *Decretals*:

Quia vero nonnulli sub specie pietatis virtutem eius, iuxta quod Apostolus ait, abnegantes, auctoritatem sibi vendicant praedicandi, quum idem Apostolus dicat: "Quomodo praedicabunt, nisi mittantur?" omnes, qui prohibiti, vel non missi, praeter auctoritatem ab apostolica sede vel catholico episcopo loci suspectam, publice vel privatim praedicationis officium usurpare praesumpserint, excommunicationis vinculo innodentur, et nisi quam citius resipuerint, alia competenti poena plectentur.<sup>23</sup>

[In truth, as the Apostle says, there are some who under the form of piety, yet denying that piety, recommend for themselves the authority to preach, whereas the same Apostle says, "How shall they preach unless they are sent?" [Romans 10.15] Let all who have been forbidden or not sent to preach, without the authority of the apostolic see or the catholic bishop of the diocese, but who still presume publicly or privately to usurp the office of preaching, be fastened by the fetter of excommunication and, unless they speedily repent, be punished by another suitable penalty.]

In applying to the Wycliffites the canonical formula concerning those who “usurp to themselves the office of preaching,” Courtenay is not necessarily accusing Wyclif and the Wycliffites of reviving heresies of a distinctly academic or scholastic kind à la Berengar, as many of his contemporaries were wont to do. Rather, he is affiliating Wycliffism with a different and potentially more troublesome sort of heresy – the sort of heresy traditionally seen to proliferate among the laity by means of illegal, unlicensed preachers. Such a heresy, not surprisingly, can be found in the *Decretals* under “de haereticis.” For instance, in the early thirteenth century, the Bishop of Metz, Étienne Bourbon, complained to Innocent III about Peter Waldo and his so-called Waldensian usurpers in his dioceses, preaching scripture in the vernacular; the pope replied to him at length in a letter that was compiled in “de haereticis.”<sup>24</sup> If there was ever a theme of this title within the *Decretals*, it would be concerns about persons “usurping the office of preacher.”<sup>25</sup>

There is no doubt that Courtenay is addressing outrages at Oxford – particularly some scandalous sermonizing at that university.<sup>26</sup> Legally speaking, however, his declarations about Wycliffites “usurping the office of preacher” are off target: there never would be “usurping” preachers within the university because there is no office of an episcopally licensed preacher to usurp, nor are there the limits of a parish within the university to violate. All matters of preaching at Oxford are subject to university statutes, which govern where sermons are to be delivered and the kinds of sermon to be preached, be they a *sermo examinatus* (given by bachelors before inception to the master’s degree) or a *sermo generalis* (an assigned public sermon preached by both bachelors and masters).<sup>27</sup> Indeed, there was always plenty of polemic preaching at the university, but such preaching was seen as disputation and was authorized by sources other than a bishop, such as the university chancellor.<sup>28</sup> It is also worth noting, in order to flesh out this inquiry, that there are no reports of Oxford Wycliffites disrupting sacramental ceremonies within chantries in town, as later reports would have it, nor are there accounts of any academic Wycliffites administering the sacraments in a patently heretical way, such that this canonical language would apply. And despite the fact that contemporaries would lament that Wycliffites have overtaken Oxford (with armed men assisting them and intimidating the archbishop’s representative), Courtenay never spoke of Wycliffite secret societies or “conventicles” at Oxford – another precise canonical term used to describe covert church services within a diocese but outside the parish church.<sup>29</sup> Nor did he respond to preaching and disputational



controversies by issuing preaching licenses to certain members of the university, as did Archbishop Arundel some years later so as to facilitate investigations into heresy.<sup>30</sup> This is all to say that Courtenay had a different concern – namely, to overcome the restrictions that jurisdictional differences between the church and university had always imposed on him and his predecessors. He did so by rendering the academic heresy of Wycliffism, as fully articulated in the condemned twenty-four conclusions, as primarily a heresy espoused by preachers, as suggested in his preamble: “some sons of eternal damnation . . . assume for themselves the right to preach, under pretense of great sanctity, certain propositions and conclusions listed below, heretical, erroneous, and false.” Whereas traditionally the canonical phrasing about persons “usurping the office of preacher” was aimed at either keeping the laity from preaching or defending the rights of parish priests against unlicensed friars, Courtenay is applying the phrase in order to declare that the Wycliffites were heretics within his jurisdiction and subject to his authority and correction (“the authority of the apostolic see”). He, simply, had had enough of scholastic heretics, and the limited denotations of “heresy” and “heretic” within the university context.<sup>31</sup> And for his actions against the university to be successful, he had to raise the stakes above and beyond the university itself.

It would seem that what I have highlighted here so far about “usurping preachers” would confirm the usual story – that the Blackfriars Council met, in part, to curtail Wycliffite preaching beyond Oxford. Yet the facticity of that claim begins to blur when we examine precisely how Courtenay offered the documentary or evidentiary “proof” about the reports (the aforementioned “fama”) concerning the usurpers, Wycliffites. Enter the bishops. If Peter McNiven is right to characterize the Blackfriars Council as a “hand-picked synod” – and, of course, it was – then we must wonder why there were bishops present at all, since the task of judging conclusions would be left to the many qualified academics at the meeting itself.<sup>32</sup> It falls short to speculate that “the bishops happened to be in the neighborhood of London” and were “asked . . . to sit in with the council in order to lend impressiveness to the decisions.”<sup>33</sup> If Courtenay were hand-picking participants, then even a superficial knowledge of English politics would indicate that he chose wisely in tapping, among others, Bishop William Wykeham, a man who would join Courtenay in placing the Wycliffites beyond Oxford and raising the stakes so high that the secular arm itself could not help but respond.

## BISHOP WYKEHAM AT BLACKFRIARS, WYCLIFFITES AT ODIHAM

Wykeham was no stranger to the largest matters of the realm, serving as Chancellor of England and Keeper of the Privy Seal under Edward III.<sup>34</sup> Perhaps it is inevitable that an ecclesiast of his stature in the 1370s would find himself drawn to the notoriously vocal Wyclif, as had already been the case with Archbishop Simon Sudbury and the then Bishop of London, Courtenay. Granted, Wykeham's confrontation with Wyclif draws us to an area of English history that still needs greater study, but some reference to the relevant events can shed light on the problem of why Wykeham would end up being a key figure in Courtenay's efforts at the Blackfriars Council.

The backstory on Wykeham pertains to the controversies involving the circumscription of Edward III's power at the Good Parliament of 1376. Wykeham was a member (one of four bishops) of the new royal council formed at the Good Parliament and apparently led an effort, in council, to pursue charges of corruption against the king's former councilors (such as William, Lord Latimer). Yet John of Gaunt and his sympathizers in the same council sought to limit Wykeham's influence by bringing eight charges against the bishop concerning the abuse of the office of chancellor. In November, Wykeham stood trial before a commission of peers, privy councilors, and fellow bishops.<sup>35</sup> Charged with one offense, his temporalities were seized.<sup>36</sup> Our William Courtenay, then a bishop, intervened on behalf of his colleague and at a February convocation persuaded the bishops that "the attack on Wykeham" was "an attack upon themselves and upon the church."<sup>37</sup> Courtenay, in retaliation, began to trouble a man that contemporaries perceived to be one of Gaunt's own, a theologian who would endorse the seizing of church temporalities and impugn the excesses of princely bishops like Wykeham. That theologian was John Wyclif, who would likely be pleased that Wykeham was dispossessed.<sup>38</sup> Wyclif was summoned to appear before Courtenay and convocation at St. Paul's on 19 February. Gaunt himself, in what is now a well-known ploy, called four doctors of theology to assist the Oxford theologian's defense.<sup>39</sup> The trial – if it can even be called that – was abortive: Gaunt and Courtenay exchanged unpleasantries, riots broke out in London, but Wykeham eventually got his privileges back, thanks eventually to Archbishop Sudbury's mediation.<sup>40</sup>

So much for Wykeham's earlier involvement in the affairs of Courtenay and Wyclif. It would seem too convenient to say that Wykeham owed

Courtenay one and thus appropriately joined the Blackfriars Council, were it not for the fact that Wykeham was the most active bishop on the Council itself and joined the archbishop in publicizing the heresies of the Oxford Wycliffites. Indeed, and strikingly, Wykeham's textual efforts run almost exactly parallel to Courtenay's own in what is a clear case of documentary coordination. On 21 May, which is the very day the Council completed its work of condemning the twenty-four Wycliffite conclusions, Wykeham issued a mandate to the Vicar of Odiham.<sup>41</sup> His mandate has an aim familiar to Courtenay's cited above: to prevent certain persons from, among other things, "usurping the office of preacher."<sup>42</sup> It reports that the Oxford Wycliffites, Nicholas Hereford, John Aston, Robert Alington, Lawrence Bedeman, "et alli ipsorum complices et sequaces [and other of their accomplices and followers]," had organized "illicita conventicula [illicit conventicles]" in the diocese of Winchester and taught various damnable errors. In an effort to quell this activity, Wykeham commanded the Vicar of Odiham that none of these men, nor their unnamed accomplices, "should publicly preach or teach in the said church of Odiham or around the said parish nor in any other place" ("ad predicandum publice vel docendum in dicta ecclesia de Odyham aut alibi infra dictam parochiam seu plateis"). In this inhibition, the bishop supplied a broad description of the offending content of these preachers' sermons, which corresponds to the many Wycliffite ideas evaluated (and eventually condemned) at the Blackfriars Council itself – "utputa de sacramento corporis et sanguinis domini nostri Ihu Christi, baptisinate, peccatorum confessione, et allis ecclesiasticis sacramentis [namely on the sacrament of the body and blood of our lord Christ Jesus, on baptism, on the sins of confession, and other sacraments of the church]."<sup>43</sup>

How are we to interpret this mandate? Hudson found it to be chronologically problematic in so far as it "may be dated too late": "quite apart from its declared date, the mandate almost certainly antedates Wykeham's participation in the Blackfriars Council."<sup>44</sup> We could concur with that idea and be at liberty to ignore the date of the mandate were we to construe canonical processes as only reactive – heretics appear, and the bishops react – and proceed under the assumption that Wykeham surely meant to report on the depraved preaching of the Oxford Wycliffites at an earlier date but only bothered to do so when the problem of heresy became urgent business at the Blackfriars Council. Yet the mandate and its timing indicate quite the opposite and point to a more thorough canonical and metropolitan process itself. Quite simply, by leaving the date of the mandate as it is, we can acknowledge its place, along with

Wykeham's role, within the deliberations at the Blackfriars Council. Wykeham issued this mandate from his residence in Winchester Palace in Southwark, just over three-quarters of a mile from the Blackfriars friary at the west end of the medieval city walls where the Council took place.<sup>45</sup> And in this mandate, he offers the evidentiary case against the Oxford Wycliffites "usurping the office of preacher" by supplying the appropriate and necessary *fama* or "respectable public opinion" against them, to which Courtenay alludes in the opening words in his mandate, issued a week after Wykeham's: "Truly, according to frequent cry and popular opinion, which we address with sorrow, it has come to our attention . . ." <sup>46</sup> Quite clearly, as we can now see, Wykeham's mandate, and *not* Courtenay's, is the *first* official publication from the Blackfriars Council. It is, moreover, the first document to identify by name the main disciples of Wyclif as heretics, and did so on the very day that the entire Council deemed such a conclusion to be, in effect, true.<sup>47</sup> With that knowledge, one of the puzzles about Courtenay's and the Council's procedures – the fact that no heretics were ever named in the first condemnations that decry persons "usurping the office of preacher" – is solved: Wykeham's mandate, which comes first in the canonical sequence of documents, supplies the names of all offenders and requires that Courtenay's mandate be understood in its light. For indeed, Courtenay's claim that the Oxford Wycliffites were "usurping the office of preacher" would be meaningless without some documentary verification that such activities were indeed taking place outside of the university. Of all of the bishops on this Council, Wykeham had had the most experience with Wycliffite problems, which go back to the 1370s and the Good Parliament, and it should come as no surprise that he would assist Courtenay in overcoming a different sort of political problem – namely, the jurisdictional complications in prosecuting heresy within the university.

If it remains plainly "difficult to discover the reason why the four Oxford men should have been preaching in the Odiham area," then perhaps we are right in emphasizing other aspects of this mandate – its place within the canonical process, its timing, the political significance of its author, and its overlap with Courtenay's own mandate.<sup>48</sup> We can, in other words, resist the mandate's own ideological agenda to give a purported documentary veracity (i.e., *fama*) to the existence of those "notorious preaching tours" and do so with three further historical and legal points in mind.<sup>49</sup> First, if the Wycliffites were directing their missionary energies to this one locale as intensely as they are said to have done, it is strange, as Hudson acknowledges, that there "is not much

evidence for the persistence of heresy in this area, though in 1412 Wokingham produced one suspect.”<sup>50</sup> Second, canon law calls for a collateral investigation into the “receptatores” and “defensores” of heretics, and such an investigation was pursued in the case of Oxford’s chancellor, Robert Rygge.<sup>51</sup> Yet in no document is there a word about the vicar (“Johannis, perpetuo vicario”), no record that he was called to Lambeth Palace to explain why he was inviting these Wycliffites into Odiham, nor anything about the “aliis capellanis” to whom the mandate was also addressed.<sup>52</sup> Because the office of vicar is no mean one, any scandal involving a vicar – much less reports of Wycliffites harassing vicars or preaching their heresies before them – might have trickled upwards into public discourse.<sup>53</sup> None have. Third, we are missing a notification in Wykeham’s register that indicates that the bishop’s mandate was acted upon – typically what is called a “certificatorium” or “executio eiusdem mandati.”<sup>54</sup> The absence of heretics in this area; the lack of any proceedings against the offending vicar; and the non-existence of the certification – all three of these things together indicate that Wykeham’s canonical strategy was designed to produce a documentary effect that would itself have legal and political ramifications of the highest order. In more plain terms, Wykeham made it up – inventing the very problem that Courtenay would amplify in his mandate of 30 May: the Wycliffites were conspiring to infect the whole realm by preaching their heresies outside of Oxford, resembling the worst of preachers described in canon law. We have by this account come to understand the meaning of Frederic Maitland’s fundamental point about canon law and its necessary forms of exaggeration: “More is demanded than expected, and what is obtained is taken upon account.”<sup>55</sup>

#### BISHOP BUCKINGHAM AND THE HERMIT HERETIC

If it is correct to suggest that Courtenay transformed Hereford and his gang from academic disputers into illicit, usurping preachers, disseminating heresies outside of the university, then we can attend to the symmetrically opposite metropolitan agenda to pin academic heresies onto known religious dissenters in the diocese of Lincoln, which is, not surprisingly, the same diocese within which Oxford lies and therefore the literally convenient place to communicate a troublesome link between Oxford and the outlying areas.

Enter John Buckingham, Bishop of Lincoln. Like Wykeham, he sat on the important first congregation of the London synod, recorded present

there as “Johannes Lyncolniensis.”<sup>56</sup> Also rather like Wykeham, he initiated a process with the Blackfriars Council in London in view. The story begins before the Council, however. On 5 March 1382, Buckingham prohibited an obscure hermit, William Swynderby, from preaching; he had heard certain “fama” that he was preaching illegally and “contra canonicas sanctiones [against canonical permissions],” seducing the flock (“gregem”) as would a wolf (“lupina”), and violating the “officium predicandi [office of preaching].”<sup>57</sup> While Buckingham says that Swynderby disseminated “zizania [heretical tares],” he does not accuse him of Wycliffite heresy, nor does he say that he “usurped the office of preacher.”<sup>58</sup> Instead, Buckingham was content to select the appropriate canonical language to control unlicensed and unwanted preachers and did so, we can bear in mind, at a time *before* more precise and vivid canonical terminologies would be applied publicly to those “usurping” Wycliffites.

Yet the bishop would refer to Swynderby as one of these “usurping” preachers just a few months later. Why so? Was it because his preaching had suddenly taken a Wycliffite turn, as Jeremy Catto suggests?: “William Swynderby’s preaching . . . may also have been under the influence of the Oxford masters.”<sup>59</sup> Or was it because the episcopal and provincial authorities, Buckingham and Courtenay, sought retroactively to turn a garden variety religious deviant into a Wycliffite, thus providing further support to their claim that academic Wycliffism was in fact a popular and even non-academic heresy? The evidence in Buckingham’s register points to the latter. For on 12 May, Buckingham, while at the Blackfriars Council in London, began a new process against Swynderby.<sup>60</sup> His register evinces an interesting collection of material that points not simply to a bishop managing his affairs from afar but rather a bishop with an entire synod to assist him in doing so.<sup>61</sup> The bishop’s renewed efforts against this preacher are evident at folio 242r of his register, where a second copy of this 5 March inhibition against Swynderby was enrolled, perhaps in a way to link this earlier process to the new one. For following this item, on folio 243r, is a set of heretical conclusions (“articli”) said to be preached by Swynderby.<sup>62</sup> These conclusions are undated, but they surely fall within the time frame of 12 May, when Buckingham ordered a new inquiry into Swynderby’s preaching and 11 July, the date of the next item in the register recording Swynderby’s trial.<sup>63</sup> Our concern here, as before in the case of Wykeham’s mandate, is with the source of these conclusions, their timing, and their application. Hudson observes that the conclusions appear to be based on those produced by the Blackfriars Council – some, “verbally identical or nearly so with heresies and errors

amongst the twenty-four.”<sup>64</sup> There is no reason to be anything but straightforward in our assessment of this evidence: Buckingham, as part of his work on the Blackfriars Council, enfolded Swynderby into the Wycliffite problems said to be coming out of Oxford.<sup>65</sup> Indeed, the rather precise confabulation between this bishop and his assistants who were drawing up the charges – in particular, three friars, one of whom, Roger Frysby, was also at the London synod, recorded present as “Rogerus Fryseby, Cantabrigiæ”<sup>66</sup> – points to an effort scripted at the Council itself during its deliberations. By the time Swynderby was officially brought to book (11 July), Buckingham conformed to the archiepiscopal plan to use an ever-repeated phrase from canon law: he depicted Swynderby as one of those who fearlessly usurp the office of preacher (“prævaricationis officium temere usurpantes”).<sup>67</sup> None of this is to deny that Swynderby was a radical preacher.<sup>68</sup> But we should not assume that he was a Wycliffite or had a theological and sacramental program that was consistent with Wyclif and his followers (it is also farfetched to say that he was posing as an Oxford Wycliffite, as some were said to do).<sup>69</sup> He was, rather, a pre-existing religious dissenter who could be easily enfolded into the larger Wycliffite problem of “usurping preachers” giving forth the conclusions condemned at Blackfriars.<sup>70</sup>

The chronicler Henry Knighton claimed that Swynderby literally came from nowhere – “Hic unde uenerit, aut ubi originem duxerit non occurrit [Where he came from, or what his origins were no one knew]”<sup>71</sup> – yet his orientation towards Wycliffism was inevitable in circumstances whereby the archbishop and his bishops wanted to render Wycliffism as the worst of public heresies. And on that score, they succeeded again, judging by the opinion not only of Knighton but of the chronicler, Thomas Walsingham, who claims that Swynderby was one of the “apostates” actually sent out by Wyclif himself.<sup>72</sup> The truth of Walsingham’s claim, however, lies in the consistent canonical narrative promulgated by members of the Blackfriars Council – a story of preachers “sent” out illegitimately either by Wyclif or by their own willful initiative, a story of gown corrupting town, and every place else.

#### ENGLAND IS ODIHAM

Let us now consider the degree to which Courtenay further raised the stakes against Wycliffism and motivated a secular response to reports of purportedly countless heretical preachers moving throughout the kingdom.



Courtenay called to Lambeth Palace the Chancellor of Oxford, Rygge, questioning him about why he did not publish his mandate of 30 May (as described above).<sup>73</sup> At the end of this interview, the archbishop handed the chancellor a very specific directive designed to prevent anyone from holding, teaching, preaching, or defending the condemned conclusions within the schools or in its public spaces; the directive specifically mentioned that John Wyclif, Nicholas Hereford, Philip Repingdon, John Aston, and Lawrence Bedeman should not be allowed to preach in these university settings.<sup>74</sup> It is clear that Courtenay knew where the real problem lay – Oxford, not Odiham. It is equally clear that he understood that a more direct order should be given to Rygge to deal with the illicit activities at the university while his broader agenda to publicize the depravities of Wycliffite preaching was undertaken in an effort to put pressure on the university from the outside. While there is no evidence of Courtenay himself telling the Oxonians to stay out of Odiham – yet another confirmation of our thesis above – there is plenty of corroboration of Courtenay's plan to bring the scandals of Wycliffism to the highest level of public awareness when the following petition was pleaded (likely by him) in parliament:

pur ce que notoire chose est, coment y a plusours malurees persones deinz le dit roialme, alantz de countee en countee, & de ville a ville, en certains habitz souz dissimulacion de grant saintee, & sanz licence du seinte Pere le Pape, ou des ordinairs des lieux, ou autre auctoritee suffisant, prechent de jour en autre nemye soulement es esglises, & cimitoirs, einz es marches, feïres, & autres lieux publiques on greindre congregation des poeple y est, diverses predications conteignantz heresyas & erreurs notoïrs, a grant emblemissement de la foy, & destruction des loys & de l'estat de Sainte Esglise, a grant peril des almes du poeple & de tout le roialme d'Engleterre; come pluis pleinement est trovez & suffisaument provez devant le reverent pere en Dieux l'Erccvesque de Canturbirs, & les evesques & autres prelates, & maïstres de divinïtee, & doctours de canoun & civile, & grante partie del clergie del dit roialme, especialment pur celle cause assemblez[:] . . . arester touz tieux precheours, & lours fautours, maintenours, & abbettours.<sup>75</sup>

[On account of that thing which is commonly known, namely, that there be many wicked persons within the said realm, going from county to county, and from town to town, in certain habits under dissimulation of great sanctity and without license of the holy father the pope, or the ordinaries of the places or other sufficient authority, preaching daily not only in churches, and cemeteries, but also in markets, fairs, and other public places where there is a great congregation of people, diverse sermons containing heresies and notorious errors, to the great besmirching of the faith, and the destruction of the laws and of the estate of holy



church, to the great peril of souls of the people and of the whole realm of England; as more plainly discovered and sufficiently proved before the reverend father in God the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the bishops and other prelates, and masters of divinity, and doctors of canon and of civil law, and a great part of the clergy of the said realm, especially for this cause assembled: . . . to arrest all such preachers, and also their fautors, maintainers.]

There is no better way to suggest that Wycliffism is a public threat than to state that it is precisely that. All of England is Odiham: Wycliffites are “going from county to county, and from town to town . . . in markets, fairs, and other public places.” We have moved very far indeed from a single, seemingly innocent mandate by Wykeham to Courtenay’s amplification of that mandate’s fundamental claims in his publication of 30 May to this Ricardian statute, and its subsequent commissions focused on arresting unlicensed heretical preachers.<sup>76</sup> Yet all of these texts work logically in succession; the more one amplifies the claims of each item, the larger its audience becomes. And the larger the audience, the more pronounced is the cultural work of the ecclesiastical publication and the more historically veracious the chronicler’s claims seem to be, grounded on the claims of all sorts of legal materials. Indeed, from 1382 on, there were waves of similar opinion about Wycliffites taking over the realm – from Knighton’s observation about 1382 that “they filled the land, and peopled it as though they were begotten in a single day” to Walsingham’s for 1389 that “Lolardi Lolardos [Lollards create Lollards],” ordaining new priests [“novos creant presbyteros”] and bestowing upon them all the sacramental powers given by the pope.<sup>77</sup> That is indeed the story of “lollards” and “lollardy,” filling up England almost overnight. Yet it is a story Courtenay and Wykeham had a hand in documenting and authorizing as actual and disturbing.<sup>78</sup> We will return to the story of “lollardy” in Chapters 2 and 3; meanwhile, let’s attempt to complete our picture of this canonical process.

#### SURPRISED BY HERESY? WYCLIFFISM OUT OF OXFORD

This account of the Blackfriars Council can stop here because we have dealt with the persons who were known to be involved in Wycliffite preaching controversies, one way or another, in 1382. There are, it can be noted, some remaining suspected persons not covered in this account, but the reasons for this omission have to do with how ecclesiastical officials dealt with their cases.<sup>79</sup> Some suspects were cornered into accepting the Council’s determinations, such as Thomas Brightwell, who joined Rygge

in his interview with the archbishop at Lambeth: Brightwell was not named a “usurping preacher” but seen as a sympathizer, giving opportunities to Wycliffites within the university.<sup>80</sup> Some were accused of favoring the usurping preachers but were themselves not accused of preaching out of Oxford, such as Thomas Hulman.<sup>81</sup> Where one never made it to official notice, such as John Ashwardby, another (John Corringham) was brought under suspicion after the Council itself in 1384 by Bishop Buckingham.<sup>82</sup>

All told, however, it remains the case that the academic disciples of Wyclif who were identified in these ecclesiastical publications either recanted or fled the university. We might hazard a date of this exodus, sometime after 13 July 1382, when a royal patent ordered Rygge to expel Wycliffites from the university.<sup>83</sup> This did not happen overnight, clearly. But it did happen. It seems safe to say that after 1382 Wycliffism began to move beyond the university or seek sources of support and patronage from persons not located at or affiliated with Oxford.<sup>84</sup> The archbishop, in short, had his part in forcing Wycliffism to move elsewhere and avail itself of locales, livings, and scriptoria outside the university. This is no small irony: Courtenay’s attempts to restrain Wycliffism by – and we must use the correct term here – manufacturing and ballooning evidence that it existed outside the university led to the exodus of Wycliffites from the university and into the broader realm. All the while, the next generation of Wycliffite scholars stepped up at Oxford, and, as Robson and Hudson have shown, they continued to read Wyclif’s works.<sup>85</sup> And it was during this time that Wycliffite texts were produced in greater number, leading to what Ralph Hanna calls “public Wycliffism,” which was “by no means contained in the Blackfriars condemnations of May 1382.”<sup>86</sup>

For whatever multiplicity of theological and political ideas among Wyclif and his students, Courtenay and his bishops at the Blackfriars Council constructed Wycliffism as a cohesive body of heretical thought and practice in order to render religious dissent as publicly visible, legally troublesome, conceptually easy to understand, and equally easy to fear. Such a claim is not meant to deny that, when various suspects met with the archbishop or, in the case of Swynderby, with Buckingham, their cases played out differently.<sup>87</sup> Nor are my claims about the Blackfriars Council – to emphasize this point for all wondering – a way of simply saying that “the bishops in effect invented Lollardy . . . to justify persecution and surveillance” for the sake of it (or for some convenient hermeneutic of suspicion on our parts).<sup>88</sup> Rather, I have made an historical point long overdue in the scholarship: the ecclesiastical response to Wycliffism in

the 1380s was by no means “leaden-footed,” as H. G. Richardson put it long ago, or unorganized.<sup>89</sup> Richardson’s findings about the tardy response to heresy are, even if formulated in 1938, not outdated, for they still survive in Michael Wilks’s fundamentally unchallenged assertion that “the ecclesiastical hierarchy found it [Wycliffism] very difficult to cope with simply because they were so completely unused to anything of the sort and lacked any experience to deal with it.”<sup>90</sup> Even Paul Strohm’s fascinating account of the discourses of heretic burning between 1382 and 1401 – discourses that preceded the practice itself in 1401 (when *De heretico comburendo* legalized the burning of relapsed heretics) – takes as its premise belated ecclesiastical action and publicity: contemporaries were, with increasing frequency, goading the church to move more expeditiously and seek the ultimate penalty for heresy, while “in retrospect, the language of official disapproval seems quite restrained” in Courtenay’s publications of 1382.<sup>91</sup> For my part, Courtenay and his bishops were not at all surprised by heresy nor were they slow to act and were rather quite prepared to deal with a heresy of the most difficult sort – a heresy originating within a university over which they did not have full control.<sup>92</sup> And in the process, they made Wycliffism infamous.<sup>93</sup> Specifically, Courtenay pursued a course of canonical action that ushered in a cultural hysteria about the ubiquity of heresy and the multitude of heretics doing illicit things anywhere and everywhere. We have already seen examples of this discourse in ecclesiastical publications, in the chronicles of Walsingham and Knighton, and in the text of statutes concerning the spread of heretical preachers throughout England. Yet, as we will now see, there is even more literary evidence that falls ostensibly in line with the publicity emanating from the Blackfriars Council – more talk of Wycliffite usurpers.

#### CANON LAW AS CULTURAL THEME

Courtenay’s anti-Wycliffite publicity was designed to be published so far and wide that copies would be “affixed to the doors of churches [u]aluis ecclesiasarum . . . affigi],” and so naturally it met a degree of measurable success in literary quarters.<sup>94</sup> And it is not the sort of success (if that is even the word) critics have assumed in suggesting that the Council made literary censorship, and the corresponding, immeasurable forms of silent compliance, a reality – with William Langland seen as the central exhibit. In fact, it seems that the Council stoked public polemic and drew attention to Wycliffism itself in very precise ways. For after the Blackfriars

Council, our familiar canonical phrase of “usurping the office of preacher” became something of an anti-Wycliffite slogan among a variety of expected genres: orthodox sermons, heresy trial accounts, statutes, polemic anti-Wycliffite poems, and preachers’ handbooks.<sup>95</sup> For instance, a vernacular sermon now preserved in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Laud Misc. 706 issues a mixture of canonical forms and estates polemic in its attack against Wycliffism: “nowadays þer be mony princys, kny3tis that con not wele decline hor owne name, the qwyche vsurpe on hom the ministracion of prechyng” – a criticism that changes the terms of Courtenay’s mandate from academics usurping preachers’ offices to persons usurping the obligations of another estate: knights do not preach.<sup>96</sup> Yet another English sermon from Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 647 offers a rather extended, if not obsessed, assessment of “usurping” Wycliffites, who are the occasion for a sermonic theme on a deadly sin: “This vengabul wrath com also for vsurpyng of the state of prelacy.”<sup>97</sup> The preacher then turns to simple allegory, viewing contemporary “lollardy” as the realization of an Old Testament figure, Oza (from 1 Chronicles 13.10): “Oza is not ellis but fortitudo, strenthe, that tokeneth not ellus bot the strenghe power of this Lollardys. They haue yleyd her hand now on Holy Cherche an waytyd hit yn mischeve and presumtuowseli hathe vsurpud the state and the offise of prelacy.”<sup>98</sup>

What canonical expressions were uttered in sermons were seen also in the legal proceedings against Wycliffite suspects, repeating the original charges of 1382 against the usurper Wycliffites – from the accusations against the lesser-known suspects such as William Ramsbury (1389) to those against the more notorious and now familiar Swynderby (1393), both of whom were said to have usurped the office of preacher.<sup>99</sup> And what was said in both contexts was echoed by John Gower in his Latin poem about the present-day pestilence, the Wycliffites: “Vsurpando fidem vultum mentitur honestum, / Caucius vt fraudem palliet inde suam [In the act of usurping the faith, (the Wycliffite sect) feigns a virtuous appearance, more cautiously so as to disguise its own deceit].”<sup>100</sup> The cultural problems of usurper Wycliffites do not stop with Gower, of course. The canonical expression entered into parliamentary discourse in the final text of the 1401 statute, *De heretico comburendo*, which permitted the burning of heretics who “predicacionis officium temere usurpantes [rashly usurping the office of preaching]” teach “novas doctrinas et opiniones iniquas hereticas et erroneas [new doctrines and nefarious heretical and erroneous opinions].”<sup>101</sup> Also around 1401, an orthodox man at Oxford University, Richard Ullerston, defended the translation of scriptures into

English and put himself in the position of tackling the usual orthodox accusation against Wycliffites – that, with a translation an old woman (“uetula”) would “docendi officium vsurparet [usurp the office of teaching].”<sup>102</sup> Finally, that the relevant canonical material was included in the Wycliffite *Rosarium* – an abridged and Englished collection of authorities found in the longer *Floretum* (London, British Library, MS Harley 401) – suggests something of the longevity of this expression concerning “[f]alse prechours” and “false prophetis” who “vsurpeþ to þam þe office of prechyng” (not Wycliffites of course).<sup>103</sup>

If we are looking for the literature of the Blackfriars Council, as it were, or – more precisely – if we are wondering how the Council affected late medieval writing, then this is it. Compliance was not silent but vocal: Courtenay was joined by a chorus of authors whose professional obligations, institutional settings, and corresponding genres were ready made to iterate the condemnatory ambitions of the Council. Most authors seemed more intent on proliferating the polemic of the Council’s decrees than on announcing the specific conclusions condemned therein. This is not to say that the condemned conclusions were ignored. Indeed, as we will see in Chapters 2 and 3, orthodox persons used those items to piece together a new and frightening creature, the stereotypical heretical “lollard” who, unsurprisingly, preaches without warrant. Yet as the next chapters also show, beginning with a study of Langland, authors quite visibly differed from Courtenay on the viability of Wycliffism and the imputation of heresy to particular groups of persons. Some of this difference has to do with the plain fact that these authors were situated outside of the ecclesiastical administration. Some of it may have to do with the ability to disagree with impunity; or it may involve an author finding Wycliffism to be refreshingly new – a claim that will be supported by the rest of this book with synchronic and diachronic evidence. Whatever the case may be, the pages that follow will demonstrate that this impulse to censure Wycliffites according to the terms of the Council was not the only public or literary response to Wycliffism, nor a particularly prevalent one – neither in the 1380s nor in the 1420s.

PART II

*The late fourteenth century:  
canonizing Wycliffism*



*The invention of “lollardy”:  
William Langland*

You have spoken enough of *Wickliffe*, and his Disciples; what were  
those *Lollards* you mentioned? Simon Birckbeck

Lollard, Lollards, Lollardy: these are the people, these are the things, these are the words, that since the medieval period have colored the historical accounts of John Wyclif and his followers, those so-called “lollards” who adhere to a radical form of religion called “lollardy.” The question is, What are “lollards”? What is “lollardy”? No words are used more frequently by scholars of late medieval English literary and religious culture whose sense, history, and usage are so murky. It is time to be clear about “lollardy” and its specific connection to the partisan writing and rewriting of the history of Wycliffite heresy. I have already discussed some aspects of this historical writing in the previous chapter where I looked at the diffusion of anti-Wycliffite rhetoric among orthodox sermons, parliamentary statutes, chronicles, poems, trial accounts, and ecclesiastical publications: in 1382, Archbishop William Courtenay saw to the successful condemnation of Wycliffite teachings at the Blackfriars Council in London, and after the Council, he pursued a massive publicity campaign that all but guaranteed the posting on every church door within the see of the Council’s siren condemnation of Wycliffite heresy, which was said to spread heretical depravities throughout all of England by means of illegal preaching, preachers who “usurp to themselves the office of preaching.” Talk of “lollards” and laments about the spread of “lollardy,” as I will now show, emerge within this specific historical and polemic context.

Were “lollard” to mean simply a “follower of John Wyclif,” however, this chapter would end here. But the fact of the matter is that “lollard” is a very complex term, and that no analysis of late medieval English literature and dissent can succeed, arguably, without first attempting to sort out its meanings as presented by a variety of literary texts, not the least of which is William Langland’s *Piers Plowman*. In 1886, Walter Skeat, the first great modern editor of *Piers Plowman*, noted that “[t]hough much has been



written about this important word, the history of it has not been very well made out; chiefly, I think, because the passages concerning it in *Piers the Plowman* have not been sufficiently observed.”<sup>1</sup> He had a point, and critics have responded, albeit nearly 100 years later. In Middle English studies, nearly all treatments of the word, and the polemic contexts from which it arose, are also studies of *Piers Plowman*, with Wendy Scase’s “*Piers Plowman*” and the New Anticlericalism and Anne Middleton’s “Acts of Vagrancy” being the most significant examples.<sup>2</sup>

To understand “lollardy” and the place of Wycliffism within the broader context of late medieval writing, then, one must understand Langland, one of the most widely read poets of his age. This chapter (and the next) will seek to offer a new beginning on the question of Langland and “lollardy” by showing that the poet goes to bat for Wycliffites by neutralizing the most widely circulated bit of polemic against them, the accusation that *they* are “lollards” – i.e., heretics. In fact, he differs from his contemporaries about the identity of the heretics troubling England and suggests instead that the real “lollards” are friars and other persons the poet deems to be materially and economically unproductive and worthy of correction by bishops. Langland’s last revision of his great poem emerges, then, as a direct involvement in Wycliffite controversies. Indeed, were it not for those controversies, Langland might not have added some of the more interesting bits to *Piers Plowman* C – all of his “lollare” material, which is new to the B text. Likewise, absent our reading of Langland’s poem directly within that Wycliffite context, we would potentially misunderstand some of the more provocative polemic generated after the Blackfriars Council.

#### LANGLAND AND THE “LOLLARE,” DEVIL IN THE DETAILS

What I have said so far about Langland and “lollardy,” however, is already up for debate because it runs afoul of a considerable amount of received opinion set in place for some twenty-five years now, ever since Pamela Gradon published her justly influential article, “Langland and the Ideology of Dissent.” For Gradon effectively established the parameters within which all inquiries into this poet’s relationship to “lollardy,” and in turn “lollardy’s” relation to Langland, proceed. Conceding that there are likenesses of thought between *Piers Plowman* and Wycliffism, she demonstrates persuasively that these are best understood as expressions of common ideas held by many in the late Middle Ages in an intellectual climate rife with the “ideology of dissent.” Gradon deftly disabuses

criticism of the notion that close proximity alone between Langland and these reformers should be reason enough to gloss *Piers Plowman* with Wycliffite texts, as Derek Pearsall did in his 1978 edition of C, and as Skeat had done before him. Langlandians, who work in one of the more lively and heated quarters of late medieval English studies, are surprisingly at a consensus with Gradon, and all scholars of Wycliffism seem inclined to agree with their Langlandian colleagues.<sup>3</sup>

Yet for Gradon and subsequent critics there is a devil in the details. It is the problem raised by that single but very important word in *Piers Plowman* – "lollare." If Langland bears no relation to Wycliffism or Wycliffite controversies, indeed if he is seen to distance himself from both in his C text, then why is it that in that very same version he writes rather obsessively about "lollares"? Would it not seem likely that Langland's "lollares" are – there is no other way to put it – "lollares?"<sup>4</sup> Right when the question itself would seem to yield an obvious "yes" on the basis of homology alone, the answer, on the authority of Gradon and other critics, is a peculiar "no." She writes that it is "improbable that Langland's *lollers* [in the C text] are Lollards, and the fact that the word *lollers* is used already in the B-text (Bxv.213) would support this contention."<sup>5</sup> This is an important point, and one to which we shall return: Gradon assumes that when Langland discusses "lollares" in C, he is elaborating on his own, albeit brief, treatment in B: "But Piers þe Plowman, *Petrus id est christus*. / For he lyueþ noȝt in lolleris ne in londleperis heremytes" (15.212–13).<sup>6</sup> Langland so prefers his own sense of the term, Gradon finds, that he outright ignores the anti-Wycliffite meaning that had been circulating since 1382, when a Cistercian monk, Henry Crumpe, stepped out at Oxford and proclaimed the Wycliffites to be "Lollardos."<sup>7</sup> According to her, Langland's "lollares" are his own creatures, and if they bear any resemblance to other late medieval social types, it would be that of the *gyrovagi*, a very broad class of persons: "wandering religious who had left their houses and joined the numerous wayfarers who infested fourteenth-century England."<sup>8</sup>

What's in a name, however? Why does Langland call a class of persons "lollares" and not *gyrovagi*, a word he in fact *never* uses in *Piers Plowman*?<sup>9</sup> Wendy Scase seeks to answer these hard questions and in so doing brings to bear a fascinating range of material to explain "lollare" discourse in the late fourteenth century. Scase builds on earlier research by Morton Bloomfield and Penn Szittyá in showing that the longstanding satire about clerical duties, privileges, and negligence are refashioned into a new and more expansive critique in which friars, extra-regulars, the poor, and

the laity are painted with the brush of anti-monastic aspersions.<sup>10</sup> Yet despite this focus on the novelty of late fourteenth-century anticlericalism, Scase proposes a definition of “lollare” that, like Gradon’s, preserves an older, pre-Wycliffite definition: Langland’s “lollers” are *gyrovagi* of his idiosyncratic making; in “*Piers Plowman* the word ‘loller’ is used to denote the gyrovagues of the late fourteenth-century church in England. The choice of this word was appropriate to the tradition of naming this genus in antireligious satire . . . [T]he commentary given on ‘loller’ in *Piers Plowman* evokes the essence of the genus . . . Such a word is appropriate to the essence of the false-hermit genus.”<sup>11</sup> So much for the essence. But what of the form? What of the word “lollare?”

What we have described as the “*Piers Plowman* sense” of “loller” seems only briefly to have been viable. Usage in the poem, and in contemporary and later writings, suggest that it was only possible for a short time in late-fourteenth century England to use “loller” as a satirical term for those who were defined by the law of Christ as the gyrovagues of the contemporary church. The evidence suggests that this definition was maintained despite (and most probably because of) the growing use of the near-homonym “lollard” for the heretics who followed the teachings of Wyclif, but that the “*Piers Plowman* sense” soon lost ground in competition with the other usage.<sup>12</sup>

The conclusion here is that Langland lost a discursive struggle. If his “lollares” bear any relationship to “lollares” or the “near homonym ‘lollard,’” it is an oppositional relation, such that, as Anne Hudson has put it, “[a]nalysis of his use of the word does not advance our understanding of Langland’s relationship to Wycliffism.”<sup>13</sup> Yet what remains to be explained is the obvious homology between the poet’s and other “lollares,” and in seeking an explanation, we shall consequently uncover a set of new issues and problems concerning the greater “invention of lollardy.” Langland is central to this chapter because he is an early indicator of “lollare” discourse, weighing in quite vocally on the problem of “lollardy.”<sup>14</sup>

#### THE BLACKFRIARS COUNCIL REIMAGINED

“Lollardy” as an epithet came to life in England after the Blackfriars Council, but not in the immediate ways the aforementioned scholars have assumed in their reading of two specific, but very different, texts – the orthodox compilation of Carmelite authorship called *Fasciculi Zizaniorum* [bundles of heresies (tares)] and a report of a sermon delivered by the heterodox Nicholas Hereford, one of the named disciples of Wyclif. Critics have taken both texts to be evidence that the term “lollard” entered

public polemic in 1382.<sup>15</sup> We must for the moment focus on this admittedly narrow question of dating and this seemingly problematic issue of origins for this reason: with the assumption that persons were scandalizing the Wycliffites as heretical "lollards" in 1382 comes the idea that Langland had the opportunity to absorb about five years' worth of citations against the "lollards" before writing C and deciding that his "lollares" would be entities distinct from anything else in late medieval England.

So let's begin with the *Fasciculi Zizaniorum*. According to the compiler's narrative and documents therein, a one Henry Crumpe, who was himself a member of the Blackfriars Council,<sup>16</sup> celebrated the anti-Wycliffite cause after several of Wyclif's disciples had stood trial before Archbishop Courtenay for holding conclusions condemned by the Council. Crumpe apparently announced that these men were "Lollardos,"<sup>17</sup> and was so vociferous in his opinion as to cause a disturbance of the peace. For this infraction, he was suspended from scholastic acts. The nature of this disturbance is difficult to know; Crumpe was eventually reinstated, only to be accused of heresy some years later.<sup>18</sup> We do know, however, that this entry, which supposedly marks the first use of the word "lollard" in England, is not a primary document from 1382 like the other episcopal and regal mandates compiled in this chronicle. In fact, the entry is part of this chronicler's narrative, which can be dated, as James Crompton believes, "sometime between 1393 and 1399."<sup>19</sup> Of course, to prove the existence of the term "lollard" in 1382, we need evidence other than accounts of 1382 written ten to fifteen years afterwards. On the authority of this text we cannot speak of a group of persons identified as "lollards" in 1382.

If Crumpe did not shout about "lollards" in 1382, then someone else must have. We now turn to the other account, which concerns Nicholas Hereford, that now familiar Wycliffite who was reportedly invited by the Chancellor of Oxford University, Robert Rygge, to preach the Ascension Day sermon on 15 May of that year. We have the Carmelite Peter Stokes to thank for seeing to it that a notary recorded Hereford's sermon, so that he could retail information concerning Wycliffite activities at the university to Archbishop Courtenay.<sup>20</sup> Hereford was said to have preached in English. The notary, however, recorded the sermon in Latin, reporting, among other things, that Hereford had charged that "[fratres] non sunt / magistri theologie set magistri vanitatis, falsi prauī, luridici et loselli [friars are not masters of theology but masters of vanity, false apostates, gimps, and reprobates]."<sup>21</sup> Scase suggests that Hereford might have been reversing the charges friars usually leveled at Wycliffites, calling the friars

themselves “lollers and losels,” which was then Latinized by the notary as “lurdici et loselli.” That reading would certainly put the term, “loller,” in 1382. But that reading of course emends the account on the authority of a hypothesis about what the notary heard (“lollers”) and what he wrote instead (“lurdici”).<sup>22</sup>

When, however, we leave this account as it is, we find ourselves with an easier case to argue, and one that could draw in a whole range of evidence penned by Wyclif and certain Wycliffites.<sup>23</sup> Rather than retro-fitting the account to satisfy the difficult claim that the word “lollare” gained “prominence in religious discourse” by 1382, we could insist that the term in question was not available to the notary and that, moreover, the notary had before him the same set of semantic options available to his contemporaries, Wyclif and the Wycliffites.<sup>24</sup> Wyclif never once mentioned the term “loller” in his writings, even in those works in which he advocates “poor, true, or faithful priests,” who would be the candidates to be called “lollards.” Nor does he mention it in his discussions of heresy involving linguistic puns that could comprehend the semantic and morphological relations between “lollia” and “lollard,”<sup>25</sup> as both the later canon lawyer William Lyndwood and the *FZ* compiler understood.<sup>26</sup> Obsessed with defending his version of Christianity, Wyclif, during the last two years of his life (1382–84, his most strident phase) forgoes the opportunity to expose the curse word, “lollard,” as yet another orthodox mischaracterization of his assertions about apostleship and of his followers. Wyclif’s oversight should seem strange in view of the current critical paradigms that have “lollards” afoot in his lifetime, named and disparaged as such. Yet what is more telling is that the Wycliffite authors of the large sermon cycle, completing their work no earlier than 1383, omit the expression as well, even where they might readily use it in discussions about heresy.<sup>27</sup> (So, too, the vernacular prose texts edited by Frederic Matthew and Thomas Arnold omit reference to “lollards,” preferring instead “lorelis.”<sup>28</sup>) What do we make of these absences? If anti-Wycliffites were calling their adversaries “lollards” as early as 1382, the Wycliffites seem to have dropped the ball in not responding to the charges. We know, however, that the Wycliffites do register the term in protest of their opponents’ persecutory methods and, eventually, appropriate it as a sect nomination. It is not until the late 1380s, around 1389, that a Wycliffite author (Hereford?) in a commentary on the Apocalypse cites the hostile sense of “lollard.”<sup>29</sup> And it is not until the mid-1390s that Wycliffites start to appropriate the term for themselves in the *Epistola Sathanae* and in a series of texts compiled in Cambridge University Library, MS Ii. 6. 26,

which I shall discuss in more detail in Chapter 3.<sup>30</sup> Based on the words of Wyclif, the Wycliffites, Hereford’s notary, and the *FZ* compiler, it seems, then, that as late as 1386, there were no “lollards” in England, only Wycliffites. Langland was not hearing lots of “lollare [lollard]” furor between the writing of B and C. We should therefore remove 1382 as a starting point for our critical “lollard” histories and, once and for all, relieve Langland of the burden of having to know about “lollardy” before it exists.

Let us now explore how the typology of the “lollard” and “lollardy” was imagined with reference to the Blackfriars Council. Looking at the examples from chronicles and bishops’ registers, we quickly realize that we need not assume that the term was at all in use in 1382 as a blunt anti-Wycliffite aspersion. Instead, we begin to see that the term is a backformation in various legal, literary, and chronicle accounts concerning the events of 1382 involving the Council. When medieval authors look back on the Council’s condemnation of Wycliffism, they often speak of the “lollardization” of Wyclif’s disciples, thereby giving off the impression that the term was in use in 1382, as part of the Council’s own processes of heretication. For example, the *FZ* chronicler states:

Unde, completo parlamento, Willelmus Cantuariensis, firma ecclesiæ columna, suos suffraganeos convocavit, cum aliis sacræ theologiæ doctoribus, et decretorum, et legum, et virorum valentium, ut deliberarent de certis conclusionibus hæreticis, *quas Wycliff et illa secta quæ dicitur Lollardorum predicaverunt*. Et damnaverunt certas conclusiones quæ inferior ponuntur, eodem anno, scilicet MCCCCLXXXII, in die S. Dunstani, post prandium, apud Prædicatores Londoniis.<sup>31</sup>

[Then, upon the completion of parliament, William of Canterbury, firm pillar of the church, called together his bishops, with other doctors of sacred theology, canonists, and lawyers, and valiant men, so as to deliberate on certain heretical conclusions, which Wyclif, and that sect which is called Lollards, had preached. And they condemned certain conclusions that were determined inferior, in the same year, 1382 of course, on the day of St. Dunstan, after lunch, at the Preacher’s house in London.]

By such recollection, the *FZ* chronicler writes “lollards” into history, depicting entities who comprise a “secta” second only to “Wycliff” in deviance but present with him from the first. Indeed, this chronicler wrote his entry on Crumpe with a similar retrospective intention: Crumpe, so he says, “vocavit hæreticos Lollardos [called the heretics Lollards].”<sup>32</sup> It is not Crumpe who is doing the talking here so much as the chronicler. To say that Crumpe called the Wycliffites “lollards” is to say so much more. Indeed, it is to situate Crumpe’s speech act within narrative about the

controversies, scandals, and persecutions at, and after, the Blackfriars Council itself, such that one entry connects with another. That the *FZ* chronicler's mode of historical reflection is a shared one is easy to see.<sup>33</sup> For instance, whatever scribe wrote a certain colophon in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 703 (which contains the texts of William Woodford) states: "Conclusiones Lollardorum dampnate Londonii anno Domini m ccc lxxxij regni regis Ricardi ii per dominum archiepiscopum Canteruarensis in suo generali consilio et pronuntiatur in pleno parlamento [The conclusions of the Lollards condemned in London in the year of our Lord 1382 in the reign of Richard II by the Archbishop of Canterbury in his general council and declared in full parliament]" (fol. 66). For chroniclers, as for others, the heresiogenesis of "lollardy" is directly connected with a retrospective sense as to what happened in 1382.

Episcopal documents exhibit a similar backformation and historical sense. In fact, the earliest use of "lollard" in a written record appears in such a document, dated 10 August 1387.<sup>34</sup> On that date, Bishop Henry Wakefield of Worcester issued a mandate that was long overdue, since it was on 16 March 1385 that Archbishop Courtenay ordered Wakefield to issue it.<sup>35</sup> In the mandate, Wakefield declared that persons belonging to the "Lollardorum confoederati [confederacy of Lollards]" – Hereford, John Aston, John Purvey, John Parker, and William Swynderby "or any other of that prohibited sect" – were forbidden to preach in the diocese, in churchyards, cemeteries, or any of the profane places.<sup>36</sup> These are the so-called disciples of Wyclif. Yet Wakefield's citation seems out of step with events and, as we will soon see, is just one instance of a larger cultural conversation about "lollardy" taking place in the mid- to late 1380s.<sup>37</sup> Wakefield's mandate seems odd because, by August, Hereford was already in prison (captured in January 1387).<sup>38</sup> What's more, Aston and William Swynderby had long abjured.<sup>39</sup> These persons, in short, are no longer "lollards." Clearly, Wakefield is not insisting that Aston and Swynderby were *still* "lollards"; nor is he suggesting that Hereford remains an errant wandering "lollard" priest.<sup>40</sup> Rather, when he cites these names, he is attempting to effect the arrest of others imagined to be persevering in Wycliffite activities ever since the Blackfriars Council – the other Herefords, Astons, and Swynderbys of late medieval England. In so doing, he identifies the cultural importance of this Council, the ways in which it came to be imagined as the event where Wycliffites were exposed as "lollards."

It is now clear how "lollard" history is written – specifically, how chroniclers, who seek out, compile, redescribe, or echo ecclesiastical mandates, bolster the legal ambitions of the church. When chroniclers



were writing their histories about the rise and condemnation of Wycliffism, they would discover the “lollard” typology in the primary documents dating to 1387 and thereafter, and would write this “lollard” backformation into the narratives concerning 1382.<sup>41</sup> By this process of incorporation, the term “lollard” became effectively coterminous – perhaps synonymous is a better word – with the year 1382. More importantly, chronicles and legal documents are but a small part of a larger typological, semantic, legal, and historiographic phenomenon, “the invention of lollardy”: from around 1387, there was a simultaneous emergence of a contentious term that pre-occupied chroniclers, members of parliament, preachers, vernacular and Latin poets, many Wycliffites, and, as I will soon show, Langland.

#### THE INVENTION OF “LOLLARDY,” C.1387

Numerous inventions of “lollardy” – even those on either side of the orthodox/heterodox divide – are similar in their differences, as Wycliffite examples would indicate. Sometime in the early 1390s, Wycliffites began to use the backformation in a resistant fashion, punning on “lollare,” expanding its lexical and grammatical range into verbs and adjectives, and reversing its sense.<sup>42</sup> We shall explore that appropriation more fully in Chapter 3. Suffice it to say here that Wycliffites register some of the same historiographic issues at stake with their orthodox contemporaries. The author of *Pierce the Ploughman’s Crede*, for instance, views 1382 as a seminal year for “lollardy”:

Wytnesse on Wycliff that warned hem [“freers” (522)] with trewth;  
For he in goodnesse of gost graythliche hem warned  
To wayuen her wikednesse and werkes of synne.  
Whou sone this sori men seweden his soule,  
And oueral lollede him with heretykes werkes. (528–32)<sup>43</sup>

By this poet’s account, Wyclif was kind-hearted enough to warn the friars about their wicked ways, but the friars took this unsolicited, sooth-saying help as an insult and thus “lollede” him with “heretykes werkes” – that is, charged him with heresy, “lollardized” him. The Wycliffite author of *Mum and the Sothsegger* also returns to 1382 to speak of “lollards” and, like his Wycliffite colleague, is clear about mendicant machinations against his group:

For furst folowid freres Lollardz manieres,  
And sith hath be shewed the same on thaym-self.  
That thaire lesingz haue lad thaym to lolle by the necke;  
At Tibourne for traison y-twyght vp thay were. (417–20)



The Blackfriars Council is the imaginary backdrop here. According to this Wycliffite, the friars persecuted “Lollardz” for their customs, their belief, but now, irony of ironies, the friars themselves have been persecuted for the “traison” of spreading rumors about Richard II’s imminent return from Ireland to reclaim his throne from the usurper, King Henry IV.<sup>44</sup> This Wycliffite takes the punitive energy stored up in “lollard” and directs it back at the friars. He in effect argues that the friars are the real “Lollardz” in so far as they deservedly “lolle by the necke.” So too does another Wycliffite, when in a sermon in London, British Library, MS Harley 1203 he extends the “lollard” puns to the friars: “What man wolde denye þese doctouris . . . ? Certis goddis lawe is foule hid and synne is lollid aboute bi lurkeris and faytouris þat lullen þese lordis and docken hem in her synnes and þese ladies bope” (fol. 91r).

So why do the Wycliffites enfold the friars into the “lollard” problem? The question directs us to an even larger issue concerning religious polemic and the problem of friars, whom the Wycliffites often regarded as heretics, yet whom many other witnesses considered as Wycliffite companions. Critics frequently identify a total break between Wyclif, Wycliffites, and the fraternal orders between 1381 and 1382 – all to the great chagrin of Wyclif – and it is true that some evidence supports this narrative, especially where the theologian breaches doctrinal decorum with his teaching on the eucharist, and where the Wycliffites themselves seem intransigently antifraternal (points to be explored in more detail in Chapter 3).<sup>45</sup> But there is also evidence suggesting that not all contemporaries comprehend this break between the Wycliffites and the friars. They prefer, rather, to show the typological conflations between groups and to argue that Wycliffism is “lollardy” and gathers in other dissenters, such as friars and unbeneficed priests. Such conflations, of course, are endemic to representations of dissent and heresy involving regulars and extra-regulars, as Gordon Leff and Ernest McDonnell show, and indeed, it is in this respect that Scase’s point rings true about the confusion of nomenclature owing to an expansion of “gyrovague” discourse about “all clerics”: bad monks, friars, hermits, assorted extra-regulars, and so forth.<sup>46</sup> Yet for us to derive a more specific sense about the expansion of “lollare” discourse in England, and why witnesses feel compelled to speak of “lollards” and friars together, we have to heed how the term itself emerges as a fusion of Wycliffite and fraternal identities and practices: it is an anti-Wycliffite expression of the first order that is nonetheless laden with antifraternal sentiment.<sup>47</sup>

We can see these conflations at work in a variety of texts in a variety of ways, not the least of which is an account associated with a controversy in

1387. It regards Peter Patteshulle, an Austin friar who reportedly converted to "lollardy" and instigated with his sermons a riot at the Austins' House in London. The scandal involving Patteshulle was widely represented, both in major chronicles and in royal writs calling for the arrest of an apostate friar William Patteshulle, who is likely Peter.<sup>48</sup> From the perspective of the writ, Patteshulle (if in fact he is Peter) was an "apostate friar." From the perspective of the chroniclers, he was a "lollard." He was both, really, just one of the many radical mendicants who were imagined to be on the brink of conversion to Wycliffism in and after 1387. Royal writs list the names of other friars who likely converted to, or were perceived to have converted to, Wycliffism.<sup>49</sup> Anxieties about such friars are registered in a royal mandate issued on 13 October 1388: "sheriffs, mayors, bailiffs, ministers and other the king's lieges [are] to arrest vagabond apostate friars of the Augustinian order."<sup>50</sup>

Once "lollard" apostasy entered into the picture, fraternal apostasy became more publicly visible. No small wonder, then, that the perceived sources of apostasy began to overlap: antifraternality gets a new target – the Wycliffites. So thinks the chronicler Henry Knighton, who believes that "lollards" embody what is so repugnant about friars:

Those things are there in the eighth chapter [of St. Amour's *De Periculis Novissimorum temporum*] . . . with citations from Holy Scripture . . . which some have applied to the mendicant friars, but which better apply to those new people, the Lollards [lollandis].<sup>51</sup>

Two groups can be proscribed at the price of one set of terms. Knighton, of course, was not alone in classifying friars and Wycliffites together. A Worcester priest, for instance, groups "lollards" with friars in a sermon against "ronners ouer contreys": "For we se now so much folk & specialiche þes lollardes, þay go barfot, þei gon openhed."<sup>52</sup> This preacher views both groups as engaging in similar activities, while claiming that "lollares" in fact exacerbate what is already so execrable about friars. Which is why he launches a patently antifraternality attack against the new heretics:

"Take non hede," abytt Crist, "of false profites, 3e, valse lollardes, þat cum to 3owe e cloþyng o mekenes & holi leuyng for to teche or to preche 3ow." "for hardeliche," seith Crist, "þei be with-in-forth mor cruwel þan any wlues, 3e, & more cursedde þan any hondes . . ."<sup>53</sup>

Yet despite all his vituperation about "lollares," how do you tell one from a friar? You cannot, if you go strictly by the stereotypes. "Lollards," so the

stereotyping goes, dress like friars, those wolves in sheep's clothing, going about barefoot without a hood and wearing torn garments as a means to display a feigned piety.<sup>54</sup> This preacher does not even mention eucharistic controversies, that great mark of difference between Wycliffites and everyone else, for his primary aim is not to speak of Wycliffite doctrine but to address a theme that comes naturally to a preacher – to show how Wycliffites infringe on the rights of parish priests. In that respect, then, “lollards” lower the standards of depravity first set by friars.<sup>55</sup>

The Worcester preacher's point is corroborated in chronicle accounts. The chroniclers are all, in one way or another, interested in demonstrating that Wyclif and his followers adopted fraternal postures and practices to seduce the laity, or formed allegiances with friars, whenever it was rhetorically or politically expedient. Knighton, who endorses a total recasting of antifraternalisms for “lollards,” believes the “lollards” to comprise a “sect,” a new but unauthorized religious order of a fraternal variety, which “uestibus de russeto utebantur . . . illorum quasi simplicitatem cordis ostendentes exterius, ut sic mentes intuencium se subtiliter sibi attraherent [wore clothes of plain russet, as though to show the simplicity of their hearts to the world, and so cunningly draw to themselves the minds of those who beheld them].”<sup>56</sup> The St. Albans chronicler, Thomas Walsingham, follows suit. Certainly no friend of friars, he writes of Wyclif: “ut magis plebis mentes deluderet, ordinibus adhæsit Mendicantium, eorum paupertatem approbans, perfectionem extollens, ut magis falleret commune vulgus [so that he might the more delude the people's minds, he associated with the Mendicant orders, approving their poverty and extolling their perfection, that he might better deceive the common kind].”<sup>57</sup> Walsingham, deploring in one breath Wyclif and the friars, goes on to call the Wycliffites “apostates” – “[Wyclif] emisit viros apostatas, de fide Catholica pessime sentientes [Wyclif sent out apostatic men, disposed most evilly against the Catholic faith]”<sup>58</sup> – readily applying the terms of fraternal disobedience, apostasy, to the newer heretics.<sup>59</sup> Lastly, the Franciscan *continuator* of the *Eulogium* illustrates how Wycliffite missions took over the fraternal project of itinerant preaching by collecting fraternal sermons: “Discipuli præfati Johannis studuerunt in compilationibus sermonum et sermones fratrum congregaverunt, euntes per totam Angliam doctrinam hujus sui magistri prædicabant [The disciples of the said John Wyclif studied from compilations of sermons, and they gathered together the sermons of the friars; going throughout all of England, they preached the doctrine of their master].”<sup>60</sup> When it came to typologies, witnesses could not keep

friars and “lollards” apart, even when they were meant by some accounts to be clearly ideologically opposed.

Some of these representations of fraternal “lollares,” no doubt, are generated by legal perceptions and problems fed by Archbishop Courtenay’s efforts in 1382 to scandalize the Oxford Wycliffites as persons “usurping to themselves the office of preaching” (as discussed in Chapter 1) – that is, doing what essentially many friars were said to do. And those perceptions continued in various forms. The *Eulogium* continuator thinks, for example, that Archbishop Thomas Arundel’s Constitutions of 1407/09, which were drafted in part to prohibit the itinerations of licenseless Wycliffites, were meant in broad terms to prevent the wanderings of an entire related group, “Lollardos et limitores illiteratos ac fratres vitiosos [Lollards and illiterate limiters and corrupt friars].”<sup>61</sup> Why did he think this? He is merely reporting a pervasive opinion about “Lollardos” and “fratres vitiosos” being equally impugnable. So pervasive was that opinion that Arundel himself had to clarify the terms of his own anti-Wycliffite enactment and reassert the rights of friars to preach in the localities.<sup>62</sup> No one understood the problems of localities and preaching rights better than our Bishop Wakefield. When he issued his 1387 mandate against the Wycliffites, he was in some sense picking up where previous legal instruments between 1382 and 1386 left off. Especially in light of that Ricardian statute of 1382 I discussed in Chapter 1 (see 17–18), Wakefield is showing himself to be responsive to the Archbishop’s program to defame and control those declared to be “preachers of unsound doctrine” – the “plusours malurees persones deinz le dit roialme, alantz de countee en countee, & de ville a ville, en certains habitz souz dissimulation de grant saintee, & sanz licence du seinte Pere le Pape [many wicked persons within the said realm, going from county to county, and from town to town, in certain habits under dissimulation of great sanctity and without license of the holy father the pope].”<sup>63</sup> Wakefield perhaps felt that Wycliffites would indeed present to him (as a bishop) problems were they to interfere with the preaching rights of the secular priests in the same way that their purported look-alikes, the friars, did.<sup>64</sup> Already out of favor in his diocese, friars were some of the “plusours malurees persones” who wear the habit (“habit”) and wander (“alantz”) from place to place often without licenses (“sanz licence”) to the chagrin of bishops and parish priests.<sup>65</sup> Of course, this bishop knew that Wycliffites were different from friars, but for the sake of economizing a legal publication, he, like the Worcester preacher, does not bother describing what makes them so different from friars. He simply calls them “lollards.” So is the name a good enough specification?

## PIERS PLOWMAN AND THE “LOLLARD” TRADITION

No. The term itself signifies so ambiguously between Wycliffites and friars that William Langland writes a significant amount of new poetry, comprising what we now call the C text of *Piers Plowman*, to sort these issues and problems out, and to offer, in the end, an analysis that bodes favorably for the Wycliffites themselves. Sometime after 1387, Langland, perhaps once living in Wakefield's own diocese, eliminates the only reference to “lolleris” in B to make way for a new use of “lollares” in C.<sup>66</sup> These additions make the C text the most exciting version of his poem, because he in essence updates it with topicality that goes directly to the contemporary “lollard” controversies I have described. To show that Langland consciously intervenes in these controversies, I first want to identify examples where he shares, in a very straightforward way, locutions about “lollares” with his contemporaries. Second, I will offer a reading of several passages of *Piers Plowman* C in order to show that, in passus 9 especially, Langland scrutinizes the name, “lollare,” and studies its application to different groups who appear as friars or who are friars.

Let's assess some important lines from Truth's pardon in passus 9 of the C text:<sup>67</sup>

Aȝen þe lawe he lyueth yf latyn be trewe:  
*Non licet uobis legem voluntati, set voluntatem coniungere legi.*  
 Kyndeliche, by Crist, ben suche ycald lollares.  
 As by þe engelisch of oure eldres of olde mennes techynge  
 He þat lolleth is lame or his leg out of ioynthe  
 Or ymaymed in som membre, for to meschief hit souneth,  
 Riht so, sothly, such manere Ermytes  
 Lollen aȝen þe byleue and þe law of holy church. (9.213–19)<sup>68</sup>

This is the crescendo of “lollare” passages in *Piers Plowman* C, where the poetry culminates in a definition of the term and its application to “such manere Ermytes.” And in this definition, Langland thinks like his contemporaries. First, when he declares, “Kyndeliche, by Crist, ben suche ycald lollares” (214), he uses an expression, repeated time and again, by those writing within the Wycliffite and anti-Wycliffite polemic – “there are those called lollards.”<sup>69</sup> A Wycliffite writing in what is now London, British Library, MS Egerton 2820 states: “Ffor ȝit knewe I neuere prest þat goiþ aboute and freli prechiþ þe gospel as doen many of þese þat been callid lollardis.”<sup>70</sup> The FZ compiler (and the *Eulogium* continuator and Walsingham) adapt the formula as a shorthand for condemnation: as

the former has it, Crumpe "vocavit" Wyclif's disciples "Lollardos."<sup>71</sup> A medieval annotator of *Piers Plowman* (Cambridge University Library, MS Additional 4325) understands the salience of the formula, underlining line 214 in red: "Kyndeliche, by Crist, ben suche ycald lollares."<sup>72</sup> These examples limn a mere formulaic correspondence, but they are important in showing that Langland understands (like his annotator) that "lollare" discourse is about recognizable formulae.

The poet's formulaicism is especially evident in the second point of agreement with his contemporaries: he identifies "lollares" as heretics: "Aȝen þe lawe he lyueth yf latyn be trewe: / *Non licet uobis legem voluntati, set voluntatem coniungere legi*" (9.213–13*a*). In this Latin – "It is not lawful for you to make the law conform to your will, but rather for you to conform your will to the law" – Langland goes to the heart of the word "heresy," meaning a perversion of the will, the wrongful "choice" to depart from the church and skew its laws and scriptural authority.<sup>73</sup> And in line 219 – "Lollen aȝen þe byleue and þe law of holy churche" – he strikes upon the sense of "heresy" variously used by his contemporaries, only here he assimilates the activity of "lollares" (the verb, "Lollen") with heretical practice itself. While he thus agrees with Wakefield in denoting "lollares" as heretics, he parts ways with the bishop and the chroniclers on how one should reconstruct the past of "lollardy."<sup>74</sup> He does not, that is, imagine the primary event of "calling" heretics "lollares" to be the Blackfriars Council of 1382 but rather throws the "lollares" into a more distant English past – "As by þe engelisch of oure eldres of olde mennes techynge" (9.215).<sup>75</sup> The "*Piers Plowman* sense" of "lollare" thus draws in the contemporary anti-Wycliffite sense, even where Langland disagrees with some of his contemporaries: for his disagreement is about "lollare" commonplaces that he does not in any way occlude, obscure, or trivialize.

Indeed, Langland's participation in the invention of "lollardy" is especially evident when we discern the narrative logic of some of that material new to C passus 9. There, Langland uses "lollare" as a term of wide classification (for hermits, friars, wasters) to sort out who in the pardon merits eternal reward or punishment. As we follow the unfolding of the pardon, however, we witness the disclosure, development, and particularization of the figure of the "lollare." At points in this disclosure, Langland clusters bad "lollares" with bad or "lewd" hermits (lines 193 and 241). Yet he always, perhaps predictably, distinguishes good "lunatyk lollares" from "holy eremytes," giving each a separate passage of poetry (lines 105–39 and 196–203). That he isolates ideal "lollares" from

despicable ones means that he, unlike Knighton and the Worcester preacher, does not want to cluster all “Lollardes” together, nor does he want to predicate every sense of “lollare” upon antifraternal tropes. He is recuperating and appropriating the term “lollare” for an ideal form of apostleship (105–39), which we shall investigate more thoroughly in Chapter 3. For now, we can deal with the associations and distinctions in the phrase, “lollares and lewede Eremytes.”<sup>76</sup> For in this expression, Langland goes to the heart of anti-Wycliffite “lollare” discourse and restricts such discourse to its antifraternal terms. To him the bad “lollare” heretic is a friar who shuns work – not a Wycliffite.<sup>77</sup>

At the start of passus 9, Langland establishes criteria to determine who warrants inclusion in Truth’s pardon. From lines 58–69, he speaks of labor and begging, and it is from here that the additions to C9 proceed in two major portions, lines 70–161 and 188–280. In the first portion, he adds some new criteria – impoverished worthiness – against which other groups will be checked: these worthies are the “poor folk in cotes,” who despite being hungry (77) and too ashamed to beg (86), rise every morning to work (79–97). Not the voluntary poor praised by Patience in B15 but rather those who are materially destitute and live on subsistence at the margins of society, these “coterelles and crokede men and blynde” should be comforted by all with alms.<sup>78</sup> Langland contrasts other groups in the pardon in light of this one:

Ac beggares with bagges þe whiche brewhouses ben here churches,  
 But they be blynde or tobroke or elles be syke,  
 Thouh he falle for defaute þat fayteth for his lyfode  
 Reche 3e neuere, 3e riche, Thouh such lorelles sterue.  
 For alle þat haen here hele and here yesyhte  
 And lymes to labory with and lollares lyf vsen,  
 Lyuen a3en goddes lawe and þe lore of holi church. (9.98–104)<sup>79</sup>

Langland insists that those who (mis)use the “lollarne lyf” (103, 140), living falsely “lyke a lollare” (158) and begging with bags (154), are distinct from the worthy “coterelles” and from the “lunatyk lollares,” the latter of whom beg “Withoute bagge” (120, 139–40).<sup>80</sup> What’s wrong with these beggars is not only that they feign worthiness but that, in so doing, they live against the “lawe” and “lore” of “holi church” (104). In thus damning these figures, Langland anticipates his declaration of heresy in the crescendo – “sothly such manere eremytes / Lollen a3en þe byleue and þe law of holy church” (9.218–19). Aptly, Piers ejects these “lollare” hermits from the pardon: “‘Forthy lollares þat lyuen in sleuthe and ouer land strikares / Buth nat in this bulle,’ quod Peres, ‘til they ben amended . . . ’” (159–60).

"LOLLARES" AS WASTERS

This first section of new material in passus 9, then, establishes the basic difference between bad and ideal "lollares"; the second section (188–280), to which I now turn, resumes the meditation on social distinctions, this time between kinds of hermits – holy and unholy.

Ac Ermytes þat inhabiten by the heye weye  
 And in borwes among brewesteres and beggen in churches –  
 Al þat holy Ermytes hatede and despisede,  
 As rychesses and reuerences and ryche menne Almesse,  
 Thise lollares, lachedraweris, lewede Ermytes  
 Coueyten þe contrarye for as cotterelles they libbeth. (189–94)

Langland puts the "Ermytes þat inhabiten by the heye weye" within a larger group of "lollares, lachedraweris, [and] lewede Ermytes," and shows them all to be despicable for not only failing to measure up to the criteria established at the outset of passus 9 but for proving themselves to be anti-types to holy hermits who practice desert asceticism, embrace poverty (196–203), and earn a place in the pardon (186–88). Having thus clustered "lewede Ermytes" with bad "lollares," Langland is ready, in the remainder of the material new to passus 9, to explore the fusions between these two groups, dropping the "lachedraweris." He begins by explaining the malpractices of "lewede ermytes":

Ac thise Ermytes þat edifien thus by the heye weye  
 Whilen were werkmen, webbes and taylours  
 And carteres knaues and Clerkes withouten grace,  
 Helden ful hungry hous and hadde muche defaute,  
 Long labour and litte wynnyng and at the laste they aspyde  
 That faytede in frere clothinge hadde fatte chekes.  
 Forthy lefte they here labour, thise lewede knaues,  
 And clothed hem in copes, clerkes as it were  
 Or oen of som ordre or elles a profete.  
 Aȝen þe lawe he lyueth yf latyn be trewe:  
*Non licet uobis legem voluntati, set voluntatem coniungere legi.*  
 Kyndeliche, by Crist, ben suche ycald lollares.  
 As by þe engelisch of oure eldres of olde mennes techyng  
 He þat lolleth is lame or his leg out of ioynthe  
 Or ymaymed in som membre, for to meschief hit souneth,  
 Riht so, sothly, such manere Ermytes  
 Lollen aȝen þe byleue and þe law of holy church. (9.204–19)

Langland explains why "lollares" and "lewede Ermytes" should be clustered together by detailing the evolution of a social type, from "lewede Ermytes"



to “lollares.” Those “Ermytes” by the highway were once tradespersons, knaves, and unbeneficed clerks, but feeling the pinch and the hunger pangs, they discover that whoever begs in friar’s clothing lives large without having to lift a finger. So, opportunistically, they “clothed hem in copes, clerkes as it were.” “Kyndeliche, by Crist, ben suche ycald lollares.”<sup>81</sup> In other words, “lollares” look like friars. Langland presents the “lollares” of contemporary, anti-Wycliffite discourse, but is obviously selective in his application of the term. So persuasive is his treatment here that a medieval reader of *Piers Plowman* annotates a line concerning bad friars, “The whiche is lollarne lyf and lewede ermytes,” with the expression, “propure lollares,” which points to the pejorative sense circulating in the post-Wycliffite age.<sup>82</sup>

Langland, of course, does not want to do away with the fraternal orders; indeed, he wishes for them to have a “fyndynge” (22.383) for the explicit purpose of eliminating their claims to communal poverty.<sup>83</sup> But he does wish to refine his antifraternality with the new “lollare” discourse. Indeed, understanding that “Eremyte” can mean “friar,”<sup>84</sup> and implying that corrupt friars freely give out their own habit to wasters,<sup>85</sup> he offers a new explanation as to why friars shun work: beneath their disguise, they are all wasters, bereft of grace, and “Clerkes” by title alone.<sup>86</sup> This is a point we can pause to appreciate, for in this fusion between wasters and fraternal “lollares,” he is looking back to passus 8 where to a passage already present in B, he adds a new “lollare” gloss (emphasized below) to some lines about friars and workers:

Y shal fynde hem fode þat fayfulleche libbeth,  
 Saue lacke þe iogelour and ionet of þe stuyes  
 And danyel þe dees playere and denote þe baude  
 And frere faytour and folk of þat ordre,  
*That lollares and loseles lele men holdeth*  
 And Robyn þe rybauder for his rousty wordes. (C.8.70–75)

Piers, speaking here, realizes that the faithful know that “folk of þat ordre” are “lollares and loseles,” and that they all can be excluded from provisions along with the wasters.

After lines 204–19, the crescendo “lollare” passage, Langland can go no higher. So he starts over, but never once loses his focus on this topic. He addresses all persons – “For holy churche hoteth alle manere peple / Vnder obedience to be and buxum to þe lawe” (220–21) – and offers positive prescriptions for the religious, lewd, and lords:<sup>87</sup> “Furste, Religious of religioun a reule to holde / And vnder obedience be by dayes and by nyhtes” (222–23).<sup>88</sup> After detailing the duties of “Lewede men” and “lordes”

with clichés drawn from three estates theory, Langland's narrator points out the faults of the first group, the religious:

Loke now where this lollares and lewede Ermites  
 Breke þis obedience þat beth so fer fram chirche.  
 Where se we hem on sonendayes the seruise to here,  
 As matynes by þe morwe til masse bygynne,  
 Or sonendayes at euensong? se we wel fewe!  
 Or labory for here lyflode as þe lawe wolde? (9.241-46)

These "lollares and lewede Ermites" exceed their limits (their obedience), do not show up at the service, and do not "labory for her lyflode" as the law requires. Who are these people? The narrator answers:

Ac aboute mydday at mele tyme y mette with hem ofte,  
 Come in his cope as he a Clerk were;  
 A bacheler or a beupere beste hym bysmede  
 And for þe cloth þat keuereth hym ykald he is a frere,  
 Wascheth and wypeth and with þe furste sitteth.  
 Ac while a wrouhte in þe world and wan his mete with treuthe  
 He sat at þe syde benche and at þe seconde table;  
 Cam no wyn in his wombe thorw þe woke longe  
 Ne no blanket on his bed ne whyte bred byfore hym. (9.247-55)

For that cloth, he is "ykald" a friar, but for these depravities he is a "lollare," a "lewede Ermite," a friar who engages in the same bad, stereotypically fraternal activities deplored in passus 15, where the "maystre, a man lyk a frere," dines with Will, Reason, Conscience, Clergy, and Patience, the temporary delegate for Piers (15.25-175).<sup>89</sup> The parallel is meant to be seen: whereas Will wants no company with the friar with "two grete chekes" (15.85), wasters strive to emulate those "in frere clothinge" with "fatte chekes" (9.209).

Fast approaching the conclusion of his new meditations, Langland strikes another topical chord concerning the "cause" of these "lollare" problems:

The cause of al this caytiftee cometh of many bischopes  
 That soffreth suche sottes and opere synnes regne.  
 Certes, hoso durste sygge hit, Simon *quasi dormit*;  
*Vigilare* were fayere for thow haste a greet charge. (9.256-59)<sup>90</sup>

Here the blame goes to bishops for "al this caytiftee." By evoking Mark 14.37, Langland reminds bishops to fulfill their obligations to be properly vigilant (*vigilare*) over their flocks and not to be asleep to spiritual depravities and temptations, "For many wakere wolues ar wripen into thy foldes" (9.260).<sup>91</sup> What wolves? The wolves of Matthew 7.15, of course –

"Beware of false prophets, who come to you in the clothing of sheep, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves" – but also those of antifraternel discourse, the friars – with the implication that bishops should license them to regulate their activities and control their numbers. Yet Langland also cites Mark 14:37 in lines 258–59, a scriptural passage of a piece with some relevant recommendations in "de haereticis": negligent bishops should be held accountable for heresies in their dioceses.<sup>92</sup> And with both gospel passages – one warning of wolves, the other a call for episcopal vigilance – Langland alludes to the canonical exhortation against heretics that became quite public in 1382, when Archbishop Courtenay commanded the bishops to be vigilant against Wycliffites, those "wolves in sheep's clothing": "The prelates of churches, in keeping the Lord's flock committed to them, ought to be most vigilant for those . . . dressed in a sheep's clothing but wolves within."<sup>93</sup> Yet Langland does not agree with Courtenay in talking about Wycliffites as wolves and, instead, criticizes not only the prelates for turning a blind eye to the "lollare" problem, but also their ordinaries for their own insufficient vigilance: "Thy berkeres aren al blynde that bringeth forth thy lombren: / *Dispergentur oues, þe dogge dar nat berke*" (9.261–62). Are the barkers blind or are they looking for the wrong "lollares," à la Courtenay's injunction?<sup>94</sup> This poet raises the question, and the answer is easily had: yes. Yet were he to bring to bear the full complement of canon law against these purportedly remiss bishops, he would argue for their removal from office. He does not. Wyclif and the Wycliffites certainly do, of course.<sup>95</sup> Langland, however, does end his new "lollare" material in C9 with the somber conclusion that no pardon can undo the spiritual damage incurred as a result of this episcopal negligence: "For shal no pardon preye for 3ow there ne no princes lettres" (9.280).

#### LANGLAND AFTER BLACKFRIARS

Langland in C appears proactive in drawing in locutions and ideas that were the central themes of contemporary polemic about Wycliffites, where bishops and chroniclers speak of "lollards" as heretical beings who autochthonically pop out of the ground, ordain one another as priests, and corrupt the faith and realm with their preaching. His effort in C is to show that "lollardy" is a construct – an utterance with a politically hostile valence that must be carefully weighed and, if need be, redirected against persons who are thought to be materially or economically unproductive, wasters and friars. The poet therefore refuses to view "lollardy" through

the eyes of orthodoxy or to ride the waves of opinion after the Blackfriars Council that Wycliffites must be resoundingly condemned. What the poet thinks of Wycliffite versions of “lollardy” – that is, an idealized form of “lollardy” – will be the subject of the [next chapter](#). For now, the parting point can be established: we cannot look at the Wycliffite context – and specifically at the legal, sermonic, and historiographical problems of “lollardy” – without seeing Langland’s C text in the very center of it all.

*The reinvention of “lollardy”:  
William Langland and his contemporaries*

for the lollards, storm was shelter.   Joyce

In the late fourteenth century, bishops, schoolmen, chroniclers, preachers, and poets of all stripes could agree on one thing: in 1382, the Wycliffites were condemned as heretics by the Blackfriars Council in London and exposed as “lollards.” Yet what they neglect to mention is that nobody actually knew what a “lollard” was in 1382.<sup>1</sup> For the word itself was not yet available and would not be until 1387.<sup>2</sup> There was simply no way yet of capturing, in a word, all that is so politically and theologically troubling about Wycliffism. That particular point of historical accuracy did not matter, however, to those looking back on 1382. For the term so saturated late medieval legal, literary, and chronicle discourse that most witnesses already knew the Wycliffites as “lollards.” The Wycliffites were, of course, not pleased about this “lollardy” – the way in which a dissident identity could be concocted on their behalf, and the ease with which a formidably large body of work and an interestingly persuasive set of ideas could be damned and dismissed in just a single word. And they were not alone in that view.

This chapter explores how “lollardy” was transformed from a curse word to a term of approbation rich in meaning and seeks to illustrate a broader cultural phenomenon I call the “reinvention of lollardy.” What is important and perhaps even surprising is that this reinvention does not occur solely through the actions of Wycliffites, as when persecuted minorities readily appropriate, so as to neutralize, the very terms used to condemn them.<sup>3</sup> Rather, it involves authors that seem initially to stand on either side of the divide of “heterodoxy” and “orthodoxy,” but which in reality inhabit a middle zone of openly shared ideas and typologies, as illustrated in texts ranging from a Wycliffite dialogue in Cambridge University Library, MS Ii.6.26, to the resolutely orthodox *The Fyve Wyttes*, from the Wycliffite *Epistola Sathanae ad Cleros* to works authored by more

familiar hands: John Clanvowe, friend of Chaucer, knight of Richard II's chamber, and author of *The Two Ways*; and William Langland, author of that reformist exploration, *Piers Plowman C*.

This reinvented version of "lollardy" is instanced in heterodox and orthodox works alike and is in a very real way a shared typology offering writers new ways to understand traditional ideas and practices. Chiefly, this new form of "lollardy" transforms fraternal ideals into a set of lay standards, a specifically lay-oriented version of virtuous poverty and Christian discipleship. What issues and problems laid the groundwork for this neo-fraternal typology, this new kind of "lollardy?" Wycliffism. This may seem like an odd conclusion, given that we are so accustomed to thinking that John Wyclif and the Wycliffites were rabid antifraternalsists and found nothing salvageable in the fraternal tradition. This is not an altogether accurate picture, however. For Wyclif and the Wycliffites believed that the fraternal ideals ought to be preserved, respected, and even practiced by all persons, not only friars. In so doing, they established the discursive field in which the typology of the lay "lollard" came to embody those ideals, altogether displacing the friars' special purchase on them. Here, then, we are exploring some of the more defining features of the post-Wycliffite age, wherein Wyclif's Latin writings, the Wycliffites' polemic English tracts and sermons, orthodox works, and this new form of "lollardy" are all viewed together in a greater, though as yet unheard, cultural conversation.

BEYOND THE BINARY: "LOLLARDY" IN A WYCLIFFITE TRACT,  
JOHN CLANVOWE'S *THE TWO WAYS*, AND *THE FYVE WYTTES*

Orthodox persons would usually conceptualize "lollardy" in one particular and lasting way: a "lollard" was anyone who held views similar to those twenty-four conclusions condemned as erroneous or heretical by the Blackfriars Council. "Lollardy," in this respect, became a rubric for retailing various items of religious deviance. Sometimes the evidence shows that the word "lollard" is literally a rubric, as when the orthodox copyist of what is now Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 703 introduces, before listing, the condemned conclusions at Blackfriars in this way: "Conclusiones Lollardorum dampnate Londonii anno Domini m ccc lxxij regni regis Ricardi ii per dominum archiepiscopum Cantuariensis in suo generali consilio et pronuntiatur in pleno parlamento [the conclusions of the Lollards condemned in London in the year of our Lord 1382 in the reign of Richard II by the Archbishop of Canterbury in

his general council and declared in full parliament].”<sup>4</sup> At other times, what we find is the penchant to call a “lollard” anyone who categorically held unorthodox beliefs. So says the author of a sermon in London, British Library, MS Harley 2268: “þis blyssyd sacrament of confessioun vocall laborys to dystroye. all so þe wykkyd pepyll þe Lollardys says þat þat is na nede to schryue a man or a woman to a prest but all anly to god. þe qwylyk opynioun dampnyd þe determinacon of all haly kyrke” (fol. 191v): “but agayns þis worchipyng of þe crucifyx . . . wykkydly prechyd and warkyd þes wykkyd Lollardys and sayd þat no mare are we to worchepe þe crosse þan we chulde worchep þe instrument þat owre fadyr ware slayn by” (fol. 194v). Listed here are some of the expected items “lollards” are said to hold – that a confessant need not seek a priest to confess, and that images of the godhead are illicit. William Thorpe communicates rather precisely the orthodox habit of assigning to “lollards” certain programmatic beliefs when he portrays Archbishop Thomas Arundel saying to him: “þou schalt forsake alle þe opynyouns whiche þe sect of Lollers holdip and is sclaudrid wiþ.”<sup>5</sup> So, too, does John Mirk.<sup>6</sup> It is a dominant trend in anti-Wycliffite discourse to posit that “lollards” hold the categorically defined heresies identified at the Blackfriars Council. Most critics of late medieval English literature are familiar with this form. But for reasons we shall explore here, it is a severely restricted sense of the term and one that, when used as a diagnostic to discern whether a given text is “Wycliffite,” fails to appreciate the variety of evidence at hand, the conversations that are conducted between authors of diverse theological proclivities.

The Wycliffites themselves certainly understood the limits of this idea of “lollardy.” Some would lament the use of the term.<sup>7</sup> Yet others would rewrite these orthodox constructions by rendering “lollard [lollare]” into a backformation of a sort more powerful than the retrospective imaginings of those hostile to Wycliffism who invented the heretical version of “lollardy” (see Chapter 2). These authors reinvented “lollardy” by situating it within biblical history and drawing from scriptural verses a set of principles for a moderate “lollard” life available to the laity, men and women alike. Let’s begin with an example from Cambridge University Library, MS Ii.6.26, a compilation largely Wycliffite in character.<sup>8</sup> The twelfth tract in this compilation is a dialogue between a “wyse” man and a “fole,” who is “denyng þe trweþe wiþ fablis” and mirthful speech.<sup>9</sup> If the ever-ubiquitous Wycliffite association of friars with fabling is the norm that can illuminate this incipit, we might wonder if this fool is either a friar or a layman under fraternal influence.<sup>10</sup> The dialogue begins with the

wiseman warning against the dangers of idle and "yuele speche" – "liynge, flatereynge, backbitynge, slaundrynge, swerynge, cursynge and wordis of rebawdrie"<sup>11</sup> – and then offers this analysis of what happens to those who speak well:

jif a symple man nowadays, louynge þis leche Crist and his lawe, wolde schewe to synners þe medicinable wordis of God to void þese ydil spechis, anoon þei dispisen hym and haten hym, and seyn he is an heritik and a lollere. But I rede men be war of þis speche, for it is foul eresie opunli azens þe Holy Goost to dispise men and wymen spekyng þe word of God.<sup>12</sup>

Speak well "þe medicinable wordis of God to void þese ydil spechis" and you could be despised as a "heritik and a lollere." The wiseman in the dialogue, however, is intent on recasting the notion of "lollere" in favorable terms and goes on to provide a scriptural gloss to his hypothetical episode:

And þer where þei clepen men lollers for spekyng Goddis word, I rede of tweye manere lollers in þe lawe of grace: summe lolliden to God-ward, and summe to þe fend-ward, and of boþe þese maner lollers I purpose to reherse summe.<sup>13</sup>

No conclusions of the recognizably heretical sort follow, nor is there any insistence that the audience believe in a specific set of teachings on, say, the sacraments. Instead, we get something broader, a "lollardology" that attempts to establish (and rewrite) the origins of "lollardy" and offer ways of imagining a broader "lollere" community of past and present members:

Þe most blessed loller þat euer was or euer schal be was oure Lord Iesu Crist, for oure synnes lollynge on þe rode tree; and of his leuerey and suyte weren Peter and Andrew and oþere moo. Þese weren blessed lollers, lollynge on þe riȝt honde of Iesu wiþ þe repentant þeeff, trustynge in Goddis mercy, to whom oure Lord bihiȝte þe blisse of paradise þe same day. But goode frendis, what was þe cause þat Crist and his suers weren lollid þus? Certis for her feiþful spekenge azens þe synnes of þe peple, and spescialli for þei spoken azens þe coueitese and synnes of vntrewe bischopis and of þe fals feined religious.<sup>14</sup>

The kinds of "loller" might have been easy to guess. Christ is a "loller." Among the "blessed lollers" are his disciples. There are also, to be sure, "cursed lollers and untriwe," none other than the "schrewid loller . . . Iudas Scarioth" himself.<sup>15</sup> The wiseman then extrapolates on these sorts of "lollers" by exhorting his audience to imagine their experience in these biblical terms – indeed, to think of themselves as "lollers" who are disciples of Christ:

Now god graunt vz gras to sue þe blesses lollers Crist and hese sueris, and to flee þe condiciouns of þese cursed lollers as Aman, Iudas, and þe þeeff þat lollid on þe left side of Crist.



As if to assure his audience that this message is anchored in scripture, the wiseman authorizes his exposition of two kinds of “loller” with a citation of Matthew 7.13–14, Jesus’s sermon on the “two ways”:

I cannot see but þis: ech man and womman here lolleþ in þe weye to endeles blisward, eiþer in þe weye þat lediþ to lastynge peyne. Neþelese, oure sauour seiþ, “Large and brood is þe weye þat lediþ to perdicoun, and ful many entren bi þis zate to helle; but ful streyzt and narow3 is þe weye þat lediþ to heuene, and ful fewe þer ben þat entren to blis bi it.” And þefore seiþ Crist to þis litl floc, “Stryue zee to entre bi þe streizt zat” of tribulacioun and anguische, and þus, bi zoure mekenesse and pacient suffrynge, ze schullen brynge zoure soule to blisse and pees þat neuer schullen end.<sup>16</sup>

And then follows the address to the audience, and a recapitulation of the “lollere” theme:

Dere cristen frendis, beþ not aschamed to speke Goddis word and lyue þeraftir, for Crist seiþ, “He þat schameþ me and my wordis bifore men, I schal schame hym before my Fader and his aungelis.” Wonder zee not, þou3 synneris dispis zou and clepe zou lolleris, for louynge of Cristis gospel.<sup>17</sup>

There is enough here for us to take stock of this new “loller” ideal. First, it is inclusive, drawing in both men and women whose life of “lolling” is the life of Christian discipleship, a life of “mekenesse and pacient suffrynge,” and of right speaking in the face of persecution. Second, it encourages “lollere” testimony, a kind of speaking and preaching – though it is not named as such here – that is divinely inspired. Third, it omits any conclusions or points of doctrine that seem explicitly “lollard” in the original sense, indicating to us that the new form of “lollardy” is a conscientious rejection of the kind of “lollardy” constructed by orthodox persons and predicated upon distinctly heretical conclusions.

This Wycliffite is not alone in this view of a “lollardy” absent of doctrinal specificity but resonant with notions of Christian discipleship and its attendant persecution. His ideas are shared by Sir John Clanvowe, author of *The Two Ways*, which takes Matthew 7.13–14 as its central theme. This work is especially interesting because it can be considered one of the few examples in medieval England of a religious work written by a layperson. For that reason alone, we would do well to elucidate its pre-occupations and contemporary relevance. Indeed, it has been something of a critical mystery as to what Clanvowe means by “lolleris,” or what makes his a “lollard” work and not something else altogether. Perhaps most frustratingly for critics, he does not define his “lolleris” (or his work) with any recognizably heretical beliefs. But this mystery is what makes his writing consistent with other Wycliffite texts, like the one above.<sup>18</sup>

Clanvowe reflects on the two ways or paths. The good and narrow way, he insists, involves living meekly and suffering patiently like Christ and following his teachings as a disciple or saint.<sup>19</sup> It also calls for the "mesurable taakyng of mete and drynke,"<sup>20</sup> the value of heavenly goods and treasures,<sup>21</sup> and the merit of behaving like the "seyntes," "boop men and wommen" of every age and condition.<sup>22</sup> All these qualities add up, says Clanvowe. They are the qualities of "lolleris and loselis," but not all look upon these features favorably:

And also swiche folke þat wolden fayne lyuen meekeliche in þis world and ben out offe swich foresaid riot, noise, and stryf, and lyuen symplely, and vsen to eten and drynken in mesure, and to cloopen hem meekely, and suffren paciently wroonges þat oopere folke doon and seyn to hem, and hoolden hem apayed with lytel good of þis world, and desiren noo greet naame of þis world, ne no pris ther of, swiche folke þe world scoorneth and hooldeþ hem lolleris and loselis, foolis and schameful wrecches.

Yet, Clanvowe continues, there is divine favor in persecution:

But, sikerly, God holdeth hem moost wise and most worsshipful, and he wole worsshipen hem in heuene for evere whan þat þoo þat þe world worsshiþeþ shuln bee shaamed and pyned for euere in helle, but 3ef þat þei amenden hem heere eer þanne þei passen out of þis world. And, þerfore, taake we sauour in þoo þinges þat been so goode and so worsshipful abouen and recche we neuer þou3 þe world scoorne vs or hoolde vs wrecches, ffor þe world scoorned Crist and heeld hym a fool. And alle þat he suffrede paciently.<sup>23</sup>

Whom the world sees as foolish "lolleris," God sees as "moost wise and worsshipful." After all, Jesus himself was "scoorned . . . and heeld . . . a fool."<sup>24</sup> In the same way that the author of the Cambridge tract advises persons to be "pacient sufferars for his lawe," so, too, does Clanvowe have his readers remember the virtue of patience, and how Christ "suffrede paciently," offering "vs ensaumple of meeknesse and of wilful pouerte."<sup>25</sup>

The examples of the Cambridge tract and Clanvowe's *Two Ways* offer an alternative, a way of reinventing the "lollard" identity irrespective of the orthodox accounts of the Blackfriars Council where "lollardy" was said to be sniffed out and condemned. Yet right where it would seem that we are witnessing a reinvention only by Wycliffites and Wycliffite sympathizers, we find an orthodox example playing a part, and helping us in turn to discern further the range and complexity of "lollard" discourse. The work in question is *The Fyve Wyttes*; it is an example of how an orthodox author not only responds to the Wycliffite reinventions of "lollardy" but also accepts them. This acceptance is astonishing, since this

writer strongly affirms the orthodox doctrine on the eucharist and the miracle of transubstantiation. But we can bear in mind that this author is not interested in pursuing such wedge issues further. Indeed, he excludes a discussion of detailed points of doctrine. Instead, his chief concern is to offer a practical lay religious program that emphasizes conduct.<sup>26</sup> He, like Clanvowe, advises measurable eating and drinking and, again like Clanvowe and the author of the Cambridge tract, places special value on the straight and meek life of the apostles.<sup>27</sup> Perhaps realizing that these are also the topics of new “lollard” discussions, he pauses to speak of “lollards” by first, interestingly enough, defending them:

*Videte ne scandalizetis vnum ex pusillis istis*, þough þey be called heretykes or lollardes. Bot be war, consente þou nouȝt to calle hem so ne leue nouȝt lyȝtly to þe commune slaundre or clamour of fooles, yf þey preche trewely Crist and his gospel . . . Nouȝt lyȝtly do oppon ȝoure herre to þulke þat dampnede hem, for vtterly men lyȝe muche oppon hem, and it is betere to be in doute of hem, whaþer þey be goede men or badde, þan presumptuously to deme hem or liztly consente to hem þat demen hem.<sup>28</sup>

It is interesting that, coming from an orthodox perspective, this author slows down the momentum of instant heretication, à la the inquisitive mythologies of 1382, by regarding as blasphemy any unconsidered and hasty use of the “lollard” epithet.<sup>29</sup> We could of course conclude that this author is taking an ultra-orthodox position of “judge not,” leaving the business of judging “lollards” or heresy to the consistory court, were it not for the fact that in the next few lines, he recommends precisely the opposite. He in fact asks readers/listeners to hear with circumspection what these new wanderers have to say, and to compare their speech to Christ’s:

If þey preche pouert, so dyde Crist and was pore himself. Yf þey repreue pride and precheþ mekenesse, so dyde Crist and was meke himself. Yf þey repreue swerynge, Crist forbedeþ it ne swor he nouȝt himself. Yf þey repreue gret aray, Crist repreuede it and seyde þat þe ryche man, ycloped in purpur and bysse, was beryed in helle. Let God alone wiþ hem: yf it be of God, it schal stande, who þat euere wiþstande; yf it be nouȝt goed, it wol be destroyed, þough ȝe do nouȝt þerto; ne deme hem nouȝt at al.<sup>30</sup>

So even while this author urges readers, “ne deme hem nouȝt at al,” he supplies the touchstones by which to assess “lollard” discourse and practice, both good and bad.<sup>31</sup>

No Wycliffite writing on “lollardy” in its ideal form would dispute these characterizations, and no author writing on the necessary care of the five senses could dismiss them out of hand. For what the author of

the *Fyve Wyttes* says about "lollards" – that audiences should receive them openly before judging – matches what a Wycliffite, in what is now British Library, MS Egerton 2820, would insist about "þese þat ben callid lollardis," one of whom would

desirip wit al his herte forto come in to opun and indifferent audience, þere to declare al þat he holdip or techip opun or priue. And if he erre he is glad to be amendid and if he seie wel desirip to be alowid and also if þei hatide heresies as þei pretenden þei wolden distrie many and grete heresies þat regnen in oure rewme but not among þe lollers.<sup>32</sup>

The view, however, that "lollards" could gain audiences certainly troubled other orthodox preachers.<sup>33</sup>

Be that as it may, this agreement between an orthodox and Wycliffite work on the question of "lollardy" should not be puzzling nor necessarily remarkable, if we think of this new "lollardy" as a typology evoking rather specific topics. "Lollardy," that is, solicits discussions of meekness, poverty, and Christian discipleship.<sup>34</sup> Moreover, the typology calls for distinctions in kinds of "lollard." We have seen these kinds in the Cambridge tract ("I rede of tweye manere lollers in þe lawe of grace"); we will see them again in Langland, and we see them here in the *Fyve Wyttes*:

It may wel be þat some of hem ben fooles and precheþ presumptously and fantasies of here owene hed. So were þer some in þe apostles tyme pretendede hem Cristes trewe disciples þat prechede in þe same wyse may nouzt þerfore repreue þe apostles. Ryzt so, þough some dop it of pryde and presumpcioun, some dop it of sadnesse and deuocioun. It is nouzt goode for þe badde repreue þe goode, laste we blasfeme þe Holy Gost.<sup>35</sup>

This last assertion, of course, aligns this work with the Cambridge tract, which states: "it is foul eresie opunli azens þe Holy Goost to dispise men and wymen spekyng þe word of God." The only option, therefore, in speaking of "lollards" is to know ahead of time that some preach poverty out of meekness, some do so out of deceit. Some live a life of poverty, others feign that life. Even though this author may indeed have some Wycliffites in mind when he speaks of bad "lollards," he nonetheless sustains distinctions between kinds that would suit both the Wycliffites and, as I will later argue, Langland. For these authors, "lollardy" is a term of differentiation between good and bad disciples and between forms of moderated piety, some praiseworthy, others condemnable. Above all, it is a typology and – in its positive uses – rarely attends to the sorts of practices or ideas we are accustomed to citing in our present critical usages of the term, "lollardy." Indeed, present scholarly usages appear to

resemble the medieval orthodox versions, whereby behind every “lollard” is a set of distinct heresies. We will return to these critical problems in the *Intermezzo*.

#### READING THE *EPISTOLA SATHANAE AD CLEROS*

So what does Wycliffism *per se* have to do with these issues surrounding this new “lollardy”? How do the more strident Wycliffite texts participate in the reinvention of “lollardy”? In answering, we turn first to a text of the recognizably polemic, Wycliffite sort written in the tradition of “anti-clerical satire common in the later Middle Ages, the *Epistola Sathanae (or Luciferi) ad Cleros*.”<sup>36</sup> Like the texts above, this one does not associate “lollardy” with a specific doctrine concerning the sacraments, as orthodox persons would expect; rather, it sees “lollardy” also as a question of kinds, chiefly to differentiate between competing models of discipleship, poverty, and Christian meekness – namely, fraternal vs. Wycliffite versions. This is, as we will see, an important background to understanding the reinvention of “lollardy,” and one that will help us appreciate something of the neo-fraternal bent to this idealized, lay type.

The *Epistola* begins with Satan’s address to his elected favorites, the friars – “The prynce Sathanas commyssion vnto his wel belovyde sectis of perdicion þis be gyven” – and then quickly turns to a discussion of our familiar theme, “mekenes and pouerte,” beginning right at the time of Christ:<sup>37</sup>

[Christ] lyved in great pouerte and penance wiþowt worldly lordschipe and worldly covrtynes, and also chese to his apostles and disciples ryght poor men, and if any were riche he made them poore bothe in sperett and in wordly good. So he taw3t þem to lyve in mekenes and pouerte, and preastis and clarkis that wold be his successouris and his disciples euermore aftur he taw3t þem to kepe þat rule, as himself berith witnesse in his gospels. And Petur and Paul taw3t euery man to lyve after Crist, as it is open in þer epistles.<sup>38</sup>

These are the words of Satan. Yet they are a rather transparent assertion of a common Wycliffite version of apostleship, and one that is intended to compete with and surpass fraternal models of the same. What is striking about the Wycliffite versions is that they render the discoveries of Francis and Dominic as Christ’s own discoveries, teachings, and rules. In short, they create a Wycliffite “rule” (“he taw3t þem to kepe þat rule”) apart from what Wycliffites commonly call the friars’ “newe tradiciouns” and “newe obseruancis,”<sup>39</sup> and they directly connect that rule to “Christ’s law.”<sup>40</sup> This tactic not only dehistoricizes the fraternal orders,

who are indeed thought to be outside of scriptural authority, but it also brackets such specific and seemingly unobjectionable resources as Francis's *Rule* – not to mention that it precludes what Wycliffites would view as overly specialized questions concerning literal vs. conventual interpretations of that foundational Franciscan document.<sup>41</sup> To friars, of course, this dehistoricizing of the orders looks like the usual anti-fraternalism. But to Wycliffites, it opens up a space for "lollardy":

And if ony man will teache þe gospell to oþer men and lyue þereafter hymself, ye entyse byschopys and prelattis to dystroy all suche men; and ye accuse suche men to byschopis of heresie, and þei thorow yowur cowncell put þem into prison, and thret to bren all suche men þat kepe well Cristis lawe and his promysse. And þer is noþyng in þe world þat pleasith us more than to dystroy Cristis fryndis, for he is our enmy and eur hath loue in all þat he can. And þerfore we thank yow wip all our hart and pray yow þat ye will contynue in our seruys. And euer, as þe world requirethe, so kepe yow that ye be not borne downe by þes lewid Lollers, but bere them down by your myȝt and lett þem not aryse, for, if þei may þer purpose, thei will mak God [*sic*] lawe to be knowen and to increase to moche to þe comon pepill. And then schuld men knowe the lyvys of your prelatys and your clarkis, and of all your religious, and specially of yow, for yf men do aftur þes Lollers þei schuld gyve yow no allmes aftur your gret ned, for then, seyng yow lusty and strong to labour and gett your lyuyng, þei will mak yow werk wip your handis, as þes lewd Lollers Petur and Poule and oþer disciples of Crist dyd.<sup>42</sup>

The antifraternalism here works through the *Epistola's* satire or generic reversals. The pseudo-prescriptions against "lolleres," or "Cristis fryndis" and "disciples of Crist," turn into their opposite – features of "lollardy" itself, not a set of heretical teachings, but a form of discipleship. A "lollard" is "ony man [who] will teache þe gospell to oþer men and lyue þereafter hymself" and "will mak God lawe to be knowen and to increase to moche to þe comon pepill," people who will themselves take up "lollardy," for indeed, "men do aftur þes Lollers." Now, as we can see, this text is beginning to sound a bit more like the more moderate tract in the Cambridge manuscript, though the implications of this "lollere" practice are more broadly conceived in the *Epistola*: when persons *do* "do aftur" "Lollards," the friars will receive no more alms and clerical abuses will be exposed.

#### BEYOND FITZRALPH: WYCLIFFITE ANTIFRATERNALISM

We can now begin to line up the Cambridge tract, *The Two Ways*, *The Fyve Wyttes*, and the *Epistola*, each of which bears similarities with the others in its advancement of "lollardy" as a form of meekness, poverty, and lay Christian discipleship. So how did the idealization of poverty,

what was once reserved for friars, acquire a lay application via “lollardy”? Clearly, the answer here is “Wycliffism,” but we need to appreciate what about Wycliffism establishes the parameters for “lollardy,” as it is ideally conceived. Specifically, we have to look at how Wycliffism takes away the ideals of poverty from the friars and laicizes them. Part of our recognizing this appropriation is to have a more refined sense of how Wycliffite antifraternalism works, beginning with a look at Wyclif’s own project.

If Wyclif argued for the systemic elimination of fraternal institutions, he would not altogether dispense with the fraternal standards.<sup>43</sup> Nor, more importantly, would he ever cease exhorting friars to realize their ideals, give up the habit, and be “true priests.”<sup>44</sup> Wyclif’s appeals to friars, no doubt, look more conspicuous before the so-constituted break with them in 1381 and again in 1382.<sup>45</sup> We should not, however, put too much credence in this narrative of rupture. For before and after these years Wyclif made distinctions between those friars who are apostates and those who are holy. In his earlier *De Apostasia*, for instance, he wrote: “Unde illi quos in religionibus expropriariis vocavi filios karrissimos, non sunt de dictis apostaticis; sed excelenter observantes illud bonum religionis Christi [Those who are in the religious orders without property, I called dearest sons; they are not of the said apostates; but they excellently observe that good religion of Christ].”<sup>46</sup> And in a later work, *Triologus* (1383), which would be cited and refuted by a Franciscan adversary, William Woodford, Wyclif maintained distinctions between good and bad friars beyond the supposed, unmendable break. In the words of Phronesis (“decideret veritatem [who shall decide the truth]”):<sup>47</sup> “[N]on tamen nego sed suppono, quod boni aliqui sunt in eis [Yet I do not deny but rather suppose that there are some good men among them].”<sup>48</sup> Wyclif has, in other words, something in common with the friars:

Suppono autem, quod aliqui fratres, quos Deus dignatur docere, ad religionem primaevam Christi devotius convertentur, et relicta sua perfidia, sive obtenta sive petita antichristi licentia redibunt libere ad religionem Christi primaevam, et tunc aedificabunt ecclesiam sicut Paulus.

[I suppose . . . that some friars, whom God shall find fit to teach, will be converted devoutly to the primitive religion of Christ; and abandoning their perfidy, shall seek or obtain freedom from the Anti-Christ, and return of their own accord to the primeval religion of Christ. And then build up the church as did Paul.]<sup>49</sup>

Wyclif is referring to the Pauline principle of laboring apostles.<sup>50</sup> Perhaps indeed the shared ideals between Wycliffites and friars have to do with the desire, as a Wycliffite would put it, to “lyue poreli & iustly & goo freli

aboute & teche frely goddis lawes."<sup>51</sup> Wyclif knew this and made adjustments.<sup>52</sup> It is in reference to such ideals – what will later become "lollard" ideals – that Wyclif devised the neo-fraternal type of the "poor priest," which is sometimes a rhetorical term with little elaboration, sometimes (after Richard Fitzralph) a reference to present-day parish priests, and at other times an outline for apostolic practice in opposition to dominant prescriptions, such as those issued by the Franciscan Archbishop John Pecham.<sup>53</sup> For Wyclif, the "poor priest" was more closely associated with a life of poverty and labor, as he says Christ understood it, than any contemporary friar.<sup>54</sup> Were the word "lollard" extant in 1382–84, Wyclif himself might have used it in reference to "poor priests," perhaps even embracing the term as his followers later did.

As for those followers, the Wycliffites are obviously raucously anti-fraternal, yet like Wyclif they also accommodate rhetorically those friars whom they perceive to be sympathetic to their program and enduring similar persecution: "For 3if a prest of her feyned ordre wole lyue poreli & iustly & goo freli aboute & teche frely goddis lawes, þei holden him apostata & prison hym, & holden hym cursed for þis prestis lif comaundid, ensaumplid of crist & his apostlis."<sup>55</sup> There are, in short, good ones in the "feyned ordre," and the good ones are, like their "lollard" counterparts, "ensaumplid of crist & his apostlis." Here is another example:

Ffor if þer be any frere þat is a prest, cunnyng in Gods lawe, and able to travel to sowe Gods wordis amonge þo puple, if he do þis offis frely, goynge fro cuntre to cuntre where he may moste profite, and ceese not for prioure ne any opir satrap, and charge not singuler habite, and begge not, bot be payed with comyne mete and drinke, as Crist and his apostilis were, þei wil pursue hym as apostata, and drawe hym to prisoun, and sey þat he is cursed for his dede. Ffor þis fre goynge about and fre preching is leueful to such a frere, sith hit is ensaumplid and comaundid of Crist, and not to be cloosid in a cloyster, as hit were Caymes Castel.<sup>56</sup>

Wherever the fraternal life "is ensaumplid and comaundid of Crist," the Wycliffites approve.<sup>57</sup> So strong is the approval in fact that a Wycliffite author will advise others to spare friars from the antifraternal assault: "& þus cristen men shulden be war to putte falsliche blame on freris . . . 3it cristen men shulden be war in here speche a3en freris, & for somme ben goode and somme euele, men shulden specifie þise euele, & not reprove good wiþ euele . . . & þus þise goode men of freris drawn hem fro here priuat rewelis & fro here lyuyng in commune, lest it neede hem to breke goddis lawe."<sup>58</sup> We are beginning to see a symmetry with "lollard" discourse already: what some authors would say of "lollards" – one should not judge them hastily – a Wycliffite is capable of saying of friars.<sup>59</sup>



Yet the novelty of Wycliffite antifraternality provides the best context for viewing idealized “lollardy” as a neo-fraternal form that paradoxically occludes any deep discussion of fraternal texts and traditions. And it is here that Wyclif and the Wycliffites part ways with important anti-fraternal ideas circulating in England after Richard Fitzralph, who can be called the father of English antifraternality. Fitzralph shows himself to be particularly close to the issues, treating the texts and traditions debated by seculars and religious alike since the thirteenth century. In his *Defensio Curatorum*, for instance, he focuses rather strictly on Francis’s *Rule* and the relevant papal decrees including John XXII’s concerning the mendicants, so as to prove the illegitimacy of fraternal begging.<sup>60</sup> He argues for the institutional support of the parish priests and, as a consequence, locates the questions of poverty to the material circumstances of these priests – all to vitiate theoretical poverty, the idea that a single friar has no possessions but only possessions in common with other friars, possessions therefore belonging to no one. To that, Fitzralph says, simply: friars are not poor, and Christ did not beg.

It is not that Wyclif or the Wycliffites are uninterested in these texts or problems. It is that they do not go as deeply into the issues of fraternality and, unlike Fitzralph, expend a portion of their time thinking about the validity of a kind of poverty or meekness modeled after Christ, as opposed to using poverty *only* as a weapon against friars and monks.<sup>61</sup> What is discernible in Wyclif’s and the Wycliffites’ contribution to the antifraternality debates on preaching and poverty, in other words, are the ideas they *subtract* from the current and past debates about friars, poverty, and preaching rights so that the remainder, the primitive church of Christ and his disciples, remains as the model transcending time and place and available to all.<sup>62</sup> Noticeably, Wyclif cites Fitzralph’s reading of the *Rule* at length as a prod to friars to return to its teachings, but he also wonders about its contemporary relevance now that its historical moment is gone, the only reading that could keep one from believing that the founders did not indeed sin in instituting the orders.<sup>63</sup> Later he critiques the legitimacy of these rules altogether in *Trialogus* – at one point, he more or less calls Francis an idiot (“Franciscus et alii mercatores idiotae”), desacralizing the cherished appellation “idiots for/of Christ” based on 1 Cor. 4.10 (“nos stulti propter Christum”) – and offers in their place a primitive, Pauline apostleship of work and preaching.<sup>64</sup> Again, unlike his predecessor, Fitzralph, Wyclif deals with the relevant, common texts (particularly papal decrees authorizing fraternal practices) only in the most general terms, and mainly as a means to strike them from the

conversation, so as potentially to shift the discussion to his greatest of generalities: the poor Christian priests or "poor priests" who simply do things differently from friars, working, preaching scripture, not begging<sup>65</sup> – especially when institutional restrictions imposed on them (but not the friars) are violated or relieved.<sup>66</sup>

The Wycliffites exhibit a similar brand of distant antifraternality, and one that would be conducive in a timely fashion to the establishment of a new "lollard" typology, in which the best of fraternal piety is preserved, and the worst of fraternal practice discarded.<sup>67</sup> Like their master, the Wycliffites do not deal extensively with the relevant papal decrees concerning the mendicants and rather, following Wyclif, refer to them, if at all, as antithetical generalities, the "decrees and decretals of þe pope."<sup>68</sup> As for fraternal texts, although Wycliffites cite favorably Francis in the *Epistola*, and despite the fact that they translate into English his *Rule* (followed by a stinging commentary that verges on insulting the founder himself),<sup>69</sup> they typically mention the rules of Benedict, Dominic, and Francis obliquely so as to contrast them with Christ's more defined and authoritative laws and order.<sup>70</sup>

Pise wordis of holi writt, siþ þei ben feyþ of cristen men, ben more to preyse þen alle propre rewle of pise newe ordoris; for here autours weren lesse worþ, & hauen neede þat þe pope conferme hem. for poul was betere & myhtyere þen alle þe patrouns of þise new ordoris; & non pope confermeþ holi writt, siþ it is first confermed of god . . . & 3if benet or dominic or fraunciss or bernard or angel of heuene make a newe secte upon cristis secte, he is herfore worþi to be blamed.<sup>71</sup>

Wycliffites will not, in other words, credit these founders for identifying many of the germane scriptural passages on Christ's poverty or for raising this Christology to a new level above prior forms.<sup>72</sup> Perhaps the most surprising detail is that they rarely deploy the discourse of hypocrisy in order to charge that friars preach but do not practice the *Rule*, because so doing would in turn instate the *Rule* as valid, and thus a text worthy of continued conversation. Friars, rather, are hypocrites simply because they "crye þat þei ben holy," "prechon iapis to begge bettute," and "feyne þer pouert."<sup>73</sup> The reasons for all of these omissions and qualifications are rather simple: the Wycliffites view the *Rule* as essentially unhelpful to a lay person seeking spiritual basics such as the Creed.<sup>74</sup> By averring this particular incompatibility between Franciscan piety and lay practice, Wycliffites can make way for "a ful rewle for alle cristene men" by which lay persons can cite scripture and practice poverty, which comes not in the form of economic deprivation but rather in the forms of moderation, meekness, and fleshly restraint.<sup>75</sup> Hence the formulation: "pouert in

spyryt stondeþ in mekenesse, whanne a man knoweþ þe Makere aboue, how he is ryche wipowton ende and we ben pore beggerus.”<sup>76</sup>

We can see that, in the end, the Wycliffites take the step Wyclif would not take, or even could not take.<sup>77</sup> Wyclif had asserted that all believers are beggars in need of spiritual resources, but he does so argumentatively against friars claiming poverty as strictly their own.<sup>78</sup> Wycliffites, however, offer ideals that would seem to be fraternal but which end up being newly cast as “lollard.” It is no wonder, then, that some witnesses in late medieval England would confuse “lollards” and friars, as we saw in Chapter 2. It is also no accident that the Wycliffites and, as we shall see, Langland are adamant in naming the new ideals, “lollard,” in order to distinguish them from fraternal precepts.

Plainly put, then, “lollardy” realizes the productive potential of Wycliffite antifraternalism and, more broadly, anticlericalism, since “lollards” are imagined to live in the ways priests refuse to live. The “lollard” life grants, in turn, the license to impugn other lay persons for their debauchery, heckle friars for their feigned impoverished piety, and to speak “azens þe coueiteise and synnes of vntrewe bischopis.”<sup>79</sup> While many orthodox persons would certainly consider a “lollard” conclusion to be that “fratres teneantur per laborem manuum, et non per mendicationem, victum suum acquirere [friars ought to work with their hands, and not by begging, to acquire their food],”<sup>80</sup> others would understand “lollardy” itself to be something far more complex than just an assertion of what friars should not do. It is, rather, an argument about what the laity should be when the friars fail to realize their own ideals.

#### LANGLAND’S “LUNATYK LOLLARES”

In the broadest sense, “lollardy” enables writers to avail themselves of the theoretical opportunities of Wycliffism without working within the vexed categories and conclusions identified by orthodox persons as heretical. As a case in point we can turn now to William Langland, because *Piers Plowman* C is such an important indicator of the possibilities of early “lollard” discourse. Having dealt in Chapter 2 with this poet’s unhappy vision of scandalous “lollares,” and why he foists a host of antifraternalisms upon them, I would now like to unpack some of the significances of his good lollares, the “lunatyk lollares” of passus 9:

And ȝut are ther opere beggares, in hele as hit semeth  
Ac hem wanteth wyt, men and women bothe,  
The whiche aren lunatyk lollares and leparez aboute

And madden as þe mone sit, more othere lasse;  
 Careth they for no colde ne counteth of non hete  
 And aren meuyng aftur þe mone; moneyeles þey walke  
 With a good will, witteles, mony wyde contreyes  
 Riht as Peter dede and poul saue þat þey preche nat  
 Ne none muracles maken; Ac many tymes hem happeth  
 To profecye of þe peple, pleinge as hit were  
 And to oure syhte as hit semeth; seth god hath þe myhte  
 To 3eue vch a wyht wyt, welthe and his hele  
 And suffreth suche go so, it semeth to myn inwyt  
 Hit aren as his postles, suche peple, or as his priue disciples  
 For a sent hem forth seluerles in a somur garnement  
 Withoute bagge and bred, as þe book telleth:  
*Quando misi vos sine pane & pera &c.* |  
 Barfoot and bredles, beggeth they of no man  
 And thauh a mete with the mayre ameddes þe strete  
 A reuerenseth hym ryht nauht, no rather then another:  
*Nemini salutaueritis per viam.*  
 Suche manere men, Matheu vs techeth,  
 We sholde haue hem to house and helpe hem when they come:  
*Et egenos vagosque induc in domum tuam . . .* (9.105–25a)<sup>81</sup>

This passage is a real oddity. There have been several attempts by critics to fathom the significance of these curious persons, but no attention has been given to what this poet calls them, "lollares" or "lunatyk lollares." The term alone can indicate an important way in which Langland himself gathers together ideals that in one respect seem fraternal but in another respect are "lollard" in the sense formulated by all of the aforementioned authors. At this point, it will be useful to reconsider Anne Hudson's position on the question of whether or not Langland's "lollares" point us to the literary, religious, and political trends beginning in the mid-1380s and involving "lollardy": "surprising though it may seem that Langland should have used the word in such an imprecise way in the version made when the condemnation of Wycliffism had gone furthest, *loller*, for him was not to be associated with any specific creed."<sup>82</sup> Yet what looks imprecise about his usage may be precise and indeed a way of understanding his relationship to Wycliffism. He does not associate "lollare" with any particular creed, but this means, as I will argue here, that his understanding of the term, and the kinds of problems and questions attending to it, is rather consistent with the usages I have described, in which "lollard" is linked to discipleship and poverty – a kind of begging that seeks not coin but rather a materially moderate life more generally.

We can review, quickly, some of the features of his “lunatyk lollares” that appear related to “lollard” typologies, after which point we will look more carefully at their significance. Langland, as we know, distinguishes these ideal yet poor apostolic “lollares” from the insipid ones, the “lewd lollares and hermits.” Like the authors cited above, Langland finds it productive to speak about kinds of “lollares,” good and bad – “tweye manere lollers” in other words. That he means a lay application for this idealized “lollardy” is nowhere more clear than in his first assertion that “lollares” are “men and women bothe,” which resounds nicely within the lay contexts imagined by the Cambridge tract author and Clanvowe, and which troubles any association of these persons with Franciscan figures who are men, such as the “*virī apostolici*,” cited by Pamela Gradon and Lawrence Clopper.<sup>83</sup> They are lay apostles – performing, in other words, “as his postles,” “as his priue disciples.”<sup>84</sup> And, finally, Langland designates these “lollares” as “lunatyks,” which certainly expresses how they appear crazy to others, but which also seems to recall the notions of “lollard” foolishness found in the authors discussed above, a foolishness that is a matter of erroneous, persecutory perception: per the writer of the *Fyve Wyttes*, “It may wel be þat some of hem ben fooles,” or, more precisely in Clanvowe, “swiche folke þe world scoorneth and hooldeþ hem lolleris and loselis, foolis and schameful wrecches.”<sup>85</sup> To assert that these “lunatyks” are only that – literally crazy – is to devalue the obvious import of these lines: “god hath þe myhte / To ȝeue vch a wyht wyt, welthe and his hele” (9.115–16).<sup>86</sup> For in those lines, Langland rationalizes the practices of these “lollares” – prophetic practices to be discussed in the [next section](#). Suffice it to say here, however, that the poet, in removing “lollare” from its orthodox constructions, emphasizes that his (speaker’s) judgments about the “lollare” identity are qualified ones, as if to perform the sympathetic posture not “presumptuously to deme hem or liztly consente to hem þat demeþ hem”:<sup>87</sup> “And ȝut ar ther oþere beggares, in hele, as hit semeth” (9.105); “And to oure syhte, as hit semeth” (9.115); “it semeth, to myn inwyȝ” (9.117).

There is more than what appears on the surface, however, and we are required at this stage to assess Langland’s interests in the “lollard” typology in relation to the fraternal models of poverty that seem to concern him so much. Critics have measured the poet’s fraternalism against his anticlericalism to tease out the remainders – his potential neo-fraternalism and/or “new anticlericalism.” Clopper especially looks deeply into the fraternal tradition, its diverse forms and controversies, to make a case that Langland was probably a friar. While I am not persuaded by all of Clopper’s

argument, I find his point useful in making my own about the ways in which this poet, like others, takes up "lollard" typologies as an *alternative* to such codified fraternal traditions. Clopper puts the burden on Langland to know the relevant insider terms and canonical texts such that, in my view, the poet's omissions of these important identity markers will appear all the more strikingly as a function of a greater "lollare" discourse.<sup>88</sup>

In other words, what goes for late medieval "lollare [lollard]" discourse, and what goes for Wyclif's and the Wycliffites' own sorting out of Christ's apostolic, lay order from Francis's *Rule*, also goes for Langland. The poet follows a pattern in using the "lollare" as a wedge between the fraternal traditions Clopper cites in helpful detail and the lay, "lollare" models Langland's contemporaries were developing away from such traditions.<sup>89</sup> Above all, it is conspicuous that the "lunatyk lollares" passage omits the *Rule* along with Francis's discovery of the relevant scriptural texts, leaving only those supporting texts that can be cited without having to owe a Franciscan debt in contemporary debates about preaching, poverty, and the apostolic life. Indeed, what else is striking is that Langland forgoes using scripture here in that familiar way, in which polemicists look for prophecies about evil and rapacious friars (i.e., Matthew 7.15, 24.11) or seek out the verses that demonstrate what friars are not and should be (Christ-like).<sup>90</sup> Instead, Langland creates an identity directly from scripture, a proper "lollare" – not a friar, which could be built, as it were, from the *Rule* back to scripture, as Francis did. Wycliffites, as we saw in the *Epistola*, also refused this latter, mediated option, and, like Langland, constructed an ideal type – be it priest, lollare, or layperson – by taking their models right from scripture with few intervening authorities (which also partly explains why "lollardy" is perceived as fundamentalism: the very identity itself is scriptural).<sup>91</sup> Most importantly, Langland removes the temptation to read the "lunatyk lollares" as friars not only by including women among their ranks, and not only by associating the bad "lollares" with (bad) friars, as we had seen in Chapter 2 (40–43), but by citing elsewhere, yet in very close proximity to this passage, a version of poverty regularly cited in support of, and sometimes against, the ideals of the Austin friars and regulars – that model of desert asceticism (9.196–202).<sup>92</sup>

#### LANGLAND AND WYCLIFFISM: POOR PRIESTS AND PROPHECY

Let us press the issue and see how Langland's good "lollares" might relate directly to Wycliffism. Critics acknowledge the extra-official status of the

“lunatyk lollares.”<sup>93</sup> Wendy Scase offers the most pointed and, I think, productive reading of the “lunatyk lollares” in saying that the “notion of non-professionalism links the lunatic lollers with the Wycliffite ‘poor priests,’ a link sometimes denied by critics.”<sup>94</sup> She is quite right that the link is “denied by critics,” and it is a link we shall therefore explore here in relation to this passage:

With a good will, witteles, mony wyde contreyes  
 Riht as Peter dede and poul saue þat þey preche nat  
 Ne none muracles maken; Ac many tymes hem happeth  
 To profecye of þe peple, pleinge as hit were  
 And to oure syhte as hit semeth; seth god hath þe myhte  
 To 3eue vch a wyht wyt, welthe and his hele  
 And suffreth suche go so, it semeth to myn inwyt  
 Hit aren as his postles, suche peple, or as his priue disciples . . . (9.III–18)

My argument is that these good “lollares” correspond to the ways in which Wycliffites imagine and authorize “lollard” preaching: God, not bishops, licenses priests to preach, regardless of their education or gender and, in so doing, ordains them as “lollard” prophets. This version of “lollard” preaching, as we shall see, is explored by Langland in his “lollares” who “profecye of þe peple.”<sup>95</sup>

While it has been asserted that Wycliffites turned away from prophecy,<sup>96</sup> we can readily see that their engagement with prophecy is in fact evident and purposeful – and largely grounded in scripture besides the Apocalypse of John and focused on contemporary topics. To begin with, Wycliffites often claim that prophecy is the preferred mode of “lollard” preaching in so far as it historically precedes any episcopal restrictions of the practice:

Pus han þey [prelatis & freris] brou3t her malice aboute to sclaunder for Lollardis þat speken of God & dryuen þe peple from þe feiþ . . . Pat a prest schulde not be lettid to preche þe troupe ne Goddis peple to speke of her bileue is opunli tau3t in þe book of Numeri xi [24–30]. Per it is rad þat Heldad & Medad prophecied albeif þat þei weren not lisensid bi Moises . . . Alas how dorne oure bischopis for schame offende a3ens þise boþe Goddis lawes & docke her prestis on euery side to 3yue hem a charge & priue hem þer office.<sup>97</sup>

Prophecy as divine inspiration, according to this author, stretches from the Old Testament to the New: God authorizes this preaching directly, and so by denying it, one denies God. And that is blasphemy.<sup>98</sup> Wycliffites, furthermore, frequently ground prophecy in Petrine and Pauline traditions so as to endorse a form of preaching that specifically details the abuses of the present: “peter seiþ, ‘cristis apostlis haueden clere spirit to prophecie’”; “prestus in Cristus lawe schulde be more spiritual, and ly3tne

folc by þe gospel and bycome prophetes."<sup>99</sup> It is a very typical Wycliffite notion that prophecy, as a spiritual gift, authorizes them to preach *cum* reprove, as Paul did:

and god seyþ to ezechiel, "siþ he haþ ȝiuen hym offys & witt, but ȝif he telle men peril & synne he shal be dampned for þis synne." & þis moueþ somme men; siþ god ȝiuen hem witt & power, lest þey disusen ȝift of god, þei vsen it when nede is; & þus seiþ poul: "Wo is me ȝif I preche not," & tell þe peple heere synnes. & herfore god biddiþ his prophete to telle his peple heere foule synnes. & þus seiþ poul to tite, þe bisshop, "reproue þou wiþ al commaundement," and poul biddiþ tymothe to reproue, to preie & to blame, but couenabliche & wiþoute ceesyng.<sup>100</sup>

And here, finally, is a relevant scriptural formula that conjoins the question of prophecy with that of preaching and the refusal to be denied the office – technically put, the Wycliffite position on episcopal licensing: "Wo is me ȝif I preche not," & tell þe peple heere synnes. & herfore god biddiþ his prophete to telle his peple heere foule synnes" (1 Cor. 9.16). Even if denied by persons, God licenses by prophecy.<sup>101</sup>

We can now bring Langland in, bearing in mind that "lollare [lollard]" is a rubric under which falls a specific set of rationalizations concerning a spiritual program that involves, in part, lay preaching and living by moderate example. What in Wycliffite texts is a direct spiritual authority from God to "lollard" priests – "siþ god ȝiuen hem witt"<sup>102</sup> – is in Langland an authority given directly to good "lollares": "seth god hath þe myhte / To ȝeue vch a wyht wyt." Langland seems aware of the ways in which Wycliffites gather together the familiar issues of prophecy, with the equally familiar scriptural passages, under the name of the "poor priest" or "lollard," both denied the office to preach but who preach anyway by means of prophecy as a form of Pauline reproof. For he characterizes his wandering, ideal "lollares" in similar terms, figures who are ready to reprove and complain: "Riht as Peter dede and poul saue þat þey preche nat / . . . Ac many tymes hem happeth / To profecye of þe peple, pleinge as hit were."<sup>103</sup> In positing "preche nat," and then "prophesy," he identifies that woeful restriction on Pauline preaching – "'Wo is me ȝif I preche not,' & tell þe peple heere synnes" – that is then surmounted by the privilege to prophesy by divine inspiration. Prophecy marks the refusal to be denied the office of preacher.<sup>104</sup> Langland licenses these practices, granting "lunatyk lollares" the authority to preach and reprove their contemporaries (9.114) – just like their "lollare" namesakes.<sup>105</sup>

Langland certainly understands, however, that the mere association of "lollare" with "profecye" is a bold enough statement. Of course, we know that he separates some of his most radical lines about clerical disendowment



from these figures, lines that are in themselves prophecies, such as Anima's disendowment speech in B (15.555–67) and *Liberum Arbitrium's* in C (17.220–38).<sup>106</sup> Were Langland to put these prophecies in the mouths of the prophetic "lunatyk lollares," would we have ever wondered about the "Wycliffism" of "lollares"?<sup>107</sup> Yet were that the case, Langland would be viewing "lollares" through orthodox lenses or through a more polemically narrow model of Wycliffism, when indeed it appears that he is viewing his "lunatyk lollares" from the perspective of a more inclusive form of Wycliffism. This is not to say that Langland's "lunatyk lollares" are "Wycliffites," for since when do typologies stand in for persons, or an idea replace an identity? On the contrary, these "lollares" are a shared typology; they embody what Langland sees to be a positive, even if ideal, contribution from Wycliffism on the question of neo-fraternal lay practice, poverty, alms, and preaching.

LANGLANDIAN "LOLLARDY": WILL'S *APOLOGIA* IN  
*PIERS PLOWMAN* C5

So much for passus 9. What of passus 5, in which Will declares himself to be curiously clothed as a "lollare"?

Thus y awakede, woet God, whan y wonede in Cornehull,  
Kytte and y in a cote, yclothed as a lollare  
And lytel ylet by, leueth me for sothe,  
Amonges lollares of londone and lewede Ermytes,  
For y made of tho men as resoun me tauhte. (5.1–5)

As we have seen throughout this chapter and the previous, there are two kinds of "lollare" – both good and bad. And unsurprisingly, there are two kinds here: Will's identity as a "lollare" and the corrupt "lollares of londone and lewede Ermytes," who also appear in passus 9 of the C text.<sup>108</sup> So if Will is rejecting the life of those corrupt persons, and indeed if he is "lytel ylet" by them, then is his the life of the "lunatyk lollare"? While no critic assesses Langland's "lollare" material as bearing Wycliffite meaning, they do associate Will's habits with those of the "lunatyk lollares" in C9. And, more broadly, all critics read both passus 5 and 9 as a conceptual unit.<sup>109</sup> It now can be argued, however, that these two passūs together thematize the poet's direct engagement with issues relating to "lollardy" and "lollare" spiritual labors.

C5 is, in the first instance, an exploration, whereby Will ("yclothed as a lollare") tries on the "lollare" identity and seeks to fit his way of life to the "lollare" ideals of passus 9. Not all aspects of Will's life, his upbringing,

education, and particular skills in spiritual service (5.35–52) correspond to the life of the "lunatyk lollares," however, for the latter remain thoroughly a typology of shared ideas across a range of writings and identities. But there are some correspondences. For the point of C5 is to assess how a typology *can* conform to Will's *modus vivendi*, how an idea can be integrated into an identity. Will's opening words, for instance, "Kytte and y in a cote, yclothed as a lollare," indicate that he is exploring the broadest possibilities of the good "lollare" life enjoyed by, as we learn in passus 9, "men and women bothe, / The whiche aren lunatyk lollares." "Kytte," in other words, should be included among the "lollares." Will, of course, talks about his life (not "Kytte"'s), and in so doing discloses, as critics recognize, his own quasi-apostolic ambitions that correspond with those of the "lunatyk lollares" in passus 9.<sup>110</sup> Will explains his spiritual labors (45–51) as a valid means of income, tantamount to the sorts of legitimate begging that were praised by the formula "to begge / Withoute bagge or botel" (51–52), which is derived from passages in the gospel of Luke (9.3, 10.4, 22.35) but which in late medieval England became a benediction encompassing a wide variety of practices.<sup>111</sup> Will uses the formula to distinguish himself from friars – "beggares with bagges" (99) – and to associate himself, again, with the "lunatyk lollares" of C9, whose spiritual activities are also extolled by the idea of begging "Withoute bagge" (9.120, 139).

Those are the literary links that rightly lead one to believe that Will favors the "lunatyk lollares." So what are the historical issues here? The problem of labor *vis-à-vis* spiritual work appears to be one. Anne Middleton has argued that C5 is not only "[f]ictively staged as an incipient prosecution under the 1388 [Cambridge labor] statutes," but is a "strategic displacement" of an even more potentially dangerous problem – heresy. She concludes: "Langland substitutes a fictively manageable threat of secular prosecution for another that his work seemed far more likely to incur in the late 1380s: ecclesiastical suspicion of it as unauthorized vernacular theology," as a work overlapping with some of the unorthodoxies of Wycliffism and all that goes by the name of heretical "lollardy."<sup>112</sup> The Cambridge labor statutes may or may not have been on Langland's mind when writing this new passus. My interest here is to emphasize what Middleton herself acknowledges – that the Cambridge labor statutes were *not* concerned with such lay or religious types, nor "with either irregular clerical vocations or anomalous lay religious callings and other vernacular forms of spiritual profession and theological reflection."<sup>113</sup> They were not concerned with such "vernacular forms," because vernacular theology was not subject to state sponsored methods of containment, as we saw earlier

(see Chapter 1 and Chapter 4, 81–84). Langland does not need a “strategic displacement” or substitution to speak about the conjunction of material and spiritual forms of labor. Indeed, both forms come to the fore here in his reflections on “lollares” and labor.

As I have shown in Chapter 2 (41–43), Langland associates friars with wasters (shirkers of work) and views both as bad “lollares.” It stands to reason, then, that if he is citing any labor legislation or simply speaking about economic and material obligations (which I think is the more plausible explanation), he wishes to argue that otiose persons who are “lollare” friars be restricted in their practices. Indeed, in C5, Reason, to the extent that he ever really fully morphs out of his role as a mental faculty and into that of a secular authority, finds problematic the sort of “lollardy” that Langland himself condemns in passus 9 as wasteful and lazy, the kind of “lollare” who will “cast hym to lyuene / In idelnesse and in ese and by otheres trauayle” (9.151–52). Reason, furthermore, applies that very criterion to Will, wondering if he is an idle “lollare.” And Will, in turn, patiently sits for Reason’s interrogations about who and what he is (5.12–21, 26–34); by answering the questions, Will gives voice to what the statutes themselves cannot fully control or even imagine – *legitimate* “lollare” vagrancy. Nor can Reason fully comprehend Will’s form of “lollardy,” as Will suggests in his demand that he cease the tangential questioning:

Forthy rebuke me ryhte nauhte, resoun, y 3ow praye,  
For in my Consience y knowe what Crist wolde y wrouhte.  
Preeyeres of a parfit man and penaunce discrete  
Is the leuest labour þat oure lord pleseth. (5.82–85)

Summoned by Will (5.83), Conscience at this point steps in and assumes that Will is classifying himself as an irregular, a religious deviant, and perhaps even a “lollare” of the unworthy variety: “Quod Consience, ‘by Crist, y can nat se this lyeth; / Ac it semeth no sad parfitnesse in Citees to begge, / But he be obediencer to prior or to mynistr’” (89–91). That Conscience misses the mark, however, is revealed in Will’s reply, “That is soth” (92). Will is saying, in other words, that Conscience’s exclamation (“it semeth no sad parfitnesse in Citees to begge”), like Reason’s questions, is valid *only* when directed at the right kind of wrong or corrupt person who should be subject to obedience – “to prior or to mynistr.” Conscience would do better to direct his remarks at errant friars, the very sort of “lollares” that Langland condemns in passus 9 for failing to keep obediences (9.242; also 220, 222), like our fat friar from Chapter 2 (43),

and other friars who lack the ability to perform the metaphorical "obedience" of "oper penaunce, as pilgrimages and trauayles" (9.236, 235). Simply, Conscience does not conceive of obedience in these broad terms. And Will, for his part, admits to holding no religious office nor to being subject to any sort of ecclesiastical approval and licensing. He only confesses to wasting time (93), wishing to continue to live as he does, however much of a risk or gamble it may be (94–97), for it will reward him in the best of situations (98–98a): "So hope y to haue of hym þat is almyghty / A gobet of his grace and bigynne a tyme / That alle tymes of my tyme to profit shal turne" (99–101).<sup>114</sup> And when Reason tells Will to make haste and begin the life "þat is louable and leele to thy soule" (103), and when Conscience agrees with that command with a "3e!" (104), we realize that Will has in fact won this debate. He can now proceed with a penitential heart (108), his affiliations with the "lunatyk lollares," for the moment, kept in place as we look forward to passus 9.

Of course, after passus 5, Will never speaks of himself as a "lollare." And, as David Aers observes, the forthcoming "lunatyk lollares" in passus 9 are "unlike the Christocentric poet of *Piers Plowman*."<sup>115</sup> But it would seem that that qualification has to be made *because* the poet, through his inscribed identity as Will, tries on the "lollare" way of life and never says outright that he rejects it. And as readers know, avowed rejection of modes of life are very clear in the poem, nowhere more clear than in the pardon, where, not accidentally, these "lollares" return. In offering a description of the "lunatyk lollares" in the pardon in passus 9, Langland does not make exceptions about them in the way he does for, say, bishops who will be pardoned "yf they ben as they sholde" (9.13; see 9.15), or illicit beggars who are "nat in this bulle . . . til they ben amended" (9.160; see 237). It is less important in my view that the "lunatyk lollares" appear once in the poem and then disappear than that they, above all, appear *here* in the pardon, and in terms lacking any exceptions as far as their merit goes. After all, regardless of whether the pardon is a real pardon, the point is that Langland adopts a discursive mode that is thoroughly evaluative and social in order to be clear about the material and spiritual efficacy of groups known to late medieval England, groups who already have a life outside of his poem in other treatments – be they the types in estates criticism or the sorts of "lollards" we have been discussing in this and the [previous chapter](#).<sup>116</sup> Langland would not write in a vacuum nor speak of utterly alien creatures in passus 9, in other words. He would not write about "lollares" without meaning to write about "lollares." For the fact of the matter is that it is impossible to find anyone talking about this group in the late fourteenth

century who does not have some investment in Wycliffite and anti-Wycliffite controversies, and Langland is no different. So what of this investment for our poet?

#### LANGLANDIAN SYMPATHIES

Historically speaking, Langland has been seen to sympathize with Wycliffism. Readers in the Reformation, for instance, thought that Langland's Wycliffite sympathies were rather easy to see. In 1548, John Bale surmised that Wyclif was the author of *Piers Plowman*, only to suggest later (1557) that a certain Robert Langland was not only the author of *Visionem Petri Aratoris* but also Wyclif's disciple.<sup>117</sup> Likewise, Robert Crowley edited and published Langland's poem in 1550, dilating in his preface "to the Reader" upon the 1370s ("in the tyme of Kynge Edwarde the thyrd") when Langland found himself in league with Wyclif:

In whose tyme it pleased God to open the eyes of many to se hys truth, geuing them boldenes of herte, to open their mouthes and crye oute agaynste the workes of darckenes, as dyd John Wicklefe, who also in those dayes translated the holye Bible into the Englishe tonge, and this writer who in reportynge certayne visions and dreames, that he fayned him selfe to haue dreamed, doeth most christianlye enstrucke the weake, and sharplye rebuke the obstynate blynde.<sup>118</sup>

Doubtless, Reformation readers saw in this poem the same reformist tendencies that Wycliffites themselves admired: in the 1390s, Wycliffite authors had adopted Langland's motif of the disenchanted narrator in works now designated as the *Piers Plowman Tradition*. The earliest and longest of these works is *Pierce the Ploughman's Crede*, dating from about 1393; one shorter quasi-Langlandian imitation of Wycliffite origin is *Mum and the Sothsegger*.<sup>119</sup>

Should these early readers be blamed for their appropriations and often wishful projections? Not at all. Michael Wilks, an authority on late medieval English church politics, put the matter rather blithely: "I often think that life would be much simpler if one could show that Wyclif was a poet and was the unknown author of *Piers Plowman*: they clearly came out of the same stable."<sup>120</sup> Perhaps so. But the question of Langland's Wycliffite sympathies can now be viewed in a more complex light, enabling us to recast that most memorable saying by David Lawton: "Whether Langland had Lollard sympathies is not the issue . . . The issue is really that Lollards had Langlandian sympathies."<sup>121</sup> Technically and precisely speaking, however, Langland can be said to have "Lollard sympathies" on account of his intense handling of "lollare" discourse in

the C text.<sup>122</sup> Indeed, what makes the C text different from B – what makes the C text the C text – is all that new poetry almost exclusively devoted to the specific socio-symbolic issues that became prevalent after the Blackfriars Council. Without Wycliffism, and without the large public reaction against it, would we have the C text? Yes. But we would be missing some of the most topically interesting bits of that revision, and our estimation of Langland would instead be that of a poet who shrinks from controversy and stifles his own voice during what is arguably (up to his time) one of England’s most urgent moments, when a set of ideas and a group of men at Oxford were declared heretics, and when, as a response, a substantial amount of literate, legal, and bureaucratic attention was directed at the problem so deftly raised by Courtenay. In this light, then, we should find it hard to accept the critical view that Langland, in writing *Piers Plowman* C, takes a turn towards theological conservatism (as supposedly signaled in his removing some of the more controversial passages from the B text, such as Piers’ tearing of a so-called pardon in the face of a priest).<sup>123</sup> Nothing could be further from the truth about the character of C and all of the new “lollare” passages.<sup>124</sup> Langland, then, does indeed have “Lollard sympathies” in the quite precise ways we have been discussing them in this and the [previous chapter](#). Had he considered it unwise to display such sympathies, he surely would have written his new poetry differently.

## *Intermezzo: Wycliffism is not “lollardy”*

One of the clichés of Wycliffite studies is to say, typically in a footnote, that “the terms ‘Wycliffite’ and ‘lollard’ will be used synonymously.” We can now reject this position as an error because it sustains a critical language that is anything but. The term “lollard” is a curse word generated by persons who, in the first instance, are intent on marshaling the greatest resources of secular and ecclesiastical institutions against individuals at Oxford and elsewhere. It is also bandied about by those who are sympathetic to such an approach. These persons used the epithet to hereticate the views of those at Oxford in the early 1380s and of others thereafter, reducing their ideas to a series of discrete and consumable formulae with the lurid appeal of a soundbite; whatever other unorthodoxies a person may have held were funneled into this preset and knowable heretical identity (as is the case with Swynderby’s encounters with the authorities in the late 1380s<sup>1</sup>). Once the term was reappropriated and became an ideal, however, it emerged as distinct from these simplifications and had very little contact with the doctrinal items we, much less medieval contemporaries, would typically recognize as Wycliffite heresy.

It is time to bear these distinctions in mind in our critical practice. Scholars often call reformist texts “lollard” on account of such texts’ doctrinal positions on the eucharist, swearing, and dominium, but in so doing, they are funneling the ideologies of a medieval orthodoxy that takes “lollardy” as an ontological descriptor connecting belief to being. Furthermore, they are applying a misnomer, because as I show in Chapter 3 Wycliffites conscientiously used the term “lollard” as a different kind of label, a way of describing positions that are in fact *not* the predictable doctrinal points generated by orthodoxy but rather are in the first instance articulated ideas about lay moderation and Christian discipleship – practices that are harder to adjudge as heresy.

Granted, some critics fuse “lollard” and “Wycliffite” in an effort to avoid a parallel set of distinctions common in the older scholarship – that

"Wycliffite" designates Wyclif's immediate academic followers, and "lollard" denotes an extramural, watered down, folksy version of Wyclif's teaching. Yet as we explore the histories of "lollare" discourse and as we seek a greater understanding of Wycliffite literary and religious culture, we should discontinue using "lollard" and "Wycliffite" as synonyms. For plain historical usage suggests a distinction, and it would be an error of historical condescension to ignore it, a foisting of our preferences onto those of the past: the latter term is attested in such chronicles as Walsingham's ("Wiclefenibus") and Knighton's ("Wyclyuyani siue Lolardi"), as well as in an explicit in Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley 703 ("Wycluianas" [fol. 102r]), but its overall usage is rarer than "lollard" and does not at all involve the same historical imaginings, linguistic problems, and theological questions we have explored here.<sup>2</sup> As it stands, then, the term "Wycliffite" is significantly freer of the baggage that goes with "lollard," and so it seems advisable, for the purposes of historical accuracy if for nothing else, that we use "Wycliffite" instead to describe that religious and political movement partially known to us in all its varieties.

Likewise – in what is a common error by scholars – given the relative ubiquity of the term "lollard" to designate a range of (ir)religious ideas and images, the absence of the term must be duly noted: it must be left as an absence and not projected into texts where it is missing. We have reviewed this problem in Chapter 2 with the case of Nicholas Hereford's Ascension Day sermon. A similar problem arises in the heresy trials. While scholars hasten to call suspects "lollards," some medieval ecclesiasts themselves, notably, did not. Norman Tanner observed the following of the so-called Kentish "lollards":

Although the terms "Lollard" and "Lollardy" have been used in this paper, they do not appear in [Archbishop William] Warham's register, nor does the name John Wycliffe. In the register reference is simply to "heresy" and "heretics". Whether, therefore, the defendants are best described as Lollards, neo-Lollards, Wycliffites or heretics remains a matter of debate, and maybe the archbishop himself was not sure how to categorize them.<sup>3</sup>

Elsewhere I have made a similar point about the courtbooks and registers related to the persecutions of those suspected of heresy in Coventry and Lichfield, also never referred to as "lollards,"<sup>4</sup> and I am not sure how much of a "debate" there needs to be, since scholarly ethics would seem to require that we not use the term to describe persons and practices if the term itself is absent from the evidence about them. Indeed, the absence of



the term would indicate that the evidence means something else, and it is our responsibility to figure out what precisely those meanings are.

Scholars may continue to feel that “lollard” has a quaint if not catchy ring evoking the nostalgia of a past age or may rely on the term to hive off a sub-field or enclave within Middle English studies. Such usages are appropriate as long as they are recognized as both modern and professionally expedient. Let’s proceed, however, as if we recognize “lollard” for what it is – a term describing the complex, contradictory, and overtly formalized identities constructed by medieval witnesses, orthodox and Wycliffite alike. When Wycliffite or sympathetic writers fashion such an identity according to the themes addressed in Chapters 2 and 3, then we can speak of a thing called “lollardy.”

## CHAPTER 4

### *Geoffrey Chaucer's Wycliffite text*

By the late 1380s, the Wycliffites were shadowed, as can be expected for any minority movement entering into public visibility and influence, by constructs – that of “lollardy” and the “lollard.” Some, such as bishops and orthodox preachers, used the word “lollard” to disparage the Wycliffites as “heretics” and, as a result, simplified the latter’s own theological and sacramental program; in such instances, the very word often blocked from view what is unique about Wycliffism as an alternative Christianity. Yet others – from John Clanvowe to William Langland, from preachers preaching within the gray areas of medieval religion, to Wycliffites themselves – construed “lollardy” as an opportunity to elaborate upon those alternative Christianities, a rubric under which to draw distinctions between Wycliffite notions of lay discipleship and more longstanding fraternal forms of belief and practice on questions of poverty and apostleship. No matter their ideological origin, nearly all usages of “lollard” point to socio-symbolic problems – specifically, to the problems of audience and the ways in which persons see, hear, and name “lollards” in a sympathetic or hostile fashion. Such trends are in evidence up to the mid-fifteenth century, as in the work of that priest-poet, John Audelay.<sup>1</sup> In most cases, when authors write about “lollardy,” they are referring to a social typology and imagining a newcomer to the scene of religion and politics, the kind of character who, for better or for worse, embroiders late medieval writing.

#### CHAUCERIAN SYMPATHIES, “LOLLARDS” IN THE WIND

Chaucer opens a small, albeit interesting, window onto the discursive world of “lollardy” in the well-known endlink to the *Man of Law's Tale*:

Owre Hoost upon his stiropes stood anon,  
And seyde, “Goode men, herkeneth everych on!  
This was a thrifty tale for the nones!

Sir Parisshe Prest," quod he, "for Goddes bones,  
 Telle us a tale, as was thi forward yore.  
 I se wel that ye lerned men in lore  
 Can moche good, by Goddes dignitee!"  
 The Parson him answerede, "Benedicite!  
 What eyleth the man, so synfully to swere?"  
 Our Host answerede, "O Jankin, be ye there?  
 I smelle a Lollere in the wynd," quod he. (2.1163–73)<sup>2</sup>

When citing this passage, readers always emphasize that the Parson's rebuke of the Host's swearing – "What eyleth the man, so synfully to swere?" – has a Wycliffite ring to it: Wycliffites are customarily thought to reject swearing, and so the Host himself is right to wonder about the Parson's identity. But what goes unnoticed in all readings of this endlink is that the Parson himself swears a "mild oath" with his "Benedicite!" ("bless us" or "bless my soul"). His is an oath familiar to, say, Theseus in the *Knight's Tale*, who promotes himself as a ruler committed not only to the God of war, marching under Mars' banner, but to love: "The god of love, a benedicite!" (1.1785).<sup>3</sup> If there are indeed "lollard" implications to the Parson's words, then, it would seem that Chaucer is, from the start, fashioning a moderate or hybrid sort, one who can utter mild oaths yet deplore harsh ones ("so *synfully* to swere," my emphasis) like the Miller's and Pardoner's blasphemous curses (1.3126, 6.651–54), and one who can attend a pilgrimage in the first place yet object to its excesses when singled out to speak to the captive audience of pilgrims.<sup>4</sup> Indeed, not all Wycliffites roundly rejected swearing, and some even licensed it with provisions.<sup>5</sup> And let's not forget that an orthodox preacher, such as John Mirk, would also, given the opportunity, react sorely to the Host's swearing, "for Goddes bones" (1166): "Hast pou be wonet to swere als / *By goddes bones* or herte, fals, / What by hys woundes, nayles or tre, / When þow myztes haue lete be?"<sup>6</sup>

Yet the Parson's words, "Benedicite! / What eyleth the man, so synfully to swere?" are not as simple as they seem. They appear, after all, to be taken partly from the *Parson's Tale* itself – "For Cristes sake, ne swereth nat so synfully in dismembrynge of Crist by soule, herte, bones, and body" (10.590) – but truncated in such a way as to leave out the moral problem of swearing, the figurative re-tearing of Jesus's body on the cross, as indicated in the latter passage. Were we to compare the Parson's words to the Host to those of his own tale, we would find that the Parson softens his message – leaving out the most biting bits as to *why* one should *not* swear. Perhaps because the Parson tempers his reproof that the Host

becomes increasingly receptive to his message, inviting the Parson to continue speaking:

Now goode men, quod oure Hoste, herkenethe me;  
 Abydeth, for Goddes digne passioun,  
 For we schal han a predicacioun;  
 This Lollere heer will prechen us somewhat." (1174–77)

The Host has changed his tune, so much so that he restarts the entire dialogue, repeating in line 1174 the same call for attention uttered above ("Goode men, herkeneth everych on!" [1164]). He is no longer boorishly cursing, but using what seems to be mockingly reverent benedictions, "for Goddes digne passioun" (1175), in a conscientious, if not over performed, attempt to show that he stands corrected of his sinful swearing and now wishes to walk the Parson's walk. In fact, the Host is so corrected and reformed that he no longer requires the Parson to "Telle us a tale, as was thi forward yore" (1167), as that "forward," too, was an oath sworn back at the Tabard Inn: "This thyng was graunted, and oure othes swore" (1.810). Accommodating the Parson in almost every respect and treating him as anything but a heretic,<sup>7</sup> the Host eggs him on to tell a rather unTale-like thing – a sermon, "For we schal han a predicacioun" (1176).

What is Harry up to? Is he welcoming the seeming "lollard"? Is he over correcting himself to please the Parson? Is he himself *performing* a kind of "lollardy"? It would seem so. It would also seem, however, that Harry's welcoming is not shared by others; or, better, it is rejected by one obstreperous pilgrim – the Shipman (as depicted by the original painting shown on the jacket of this book):

Nay, by fader soule, that schal he nat  
 Seyde the Shipman, "Heer schal he nat preche;  
 He schal no gospel glosen here ne teche.  
 We leven alle in the grete God," quod he;  
 "He wolde sowen som difficulte,  
 Or springen cokkel in oure clene corn.  
 And therefore, Hoost, I warne thee biforn,  
 My joly body schal a tale telle,  
 And I schal clynken you so mery a belle,  
 That I schal waken al this compaigne  
 But it schal not been of philosophie,  
 Ne phislyas, ne termes queinte of lawe.  
 Ther is but litel Latyn in my mawe!" (2.1178–90)

How is it that the Shipman predicts that the Parson "wolde sowen som difficulte" among the pilgrims? The answer is easy, having to do with the

issues of reception and perception mentioned at the outset: from the Shipman's perspective, the Parson has *already* introduced "som difficulte" into the pilgrimage, and the Host is the primary example, the man who invites the Parson in and fails to silence him for seeming to be a "lollard." To the Shipman, in other words, the problem is not the Parson per se, but the Host's own solicitousness towards him. It is the Host who appears uneducated in the purportedly evil ways of "lollardy": "And therefore, Hoost, I warne thee biforn" (1184). Indeed, the Shipman educates the Host primarily by redefining the meaning of "lollard." He takes the Host's more playful use of "Lollere" (1173, 1177) and redefines the term as "heresy" in a way suited to Latinate, orthodox uses, which decry the *lollia* (meaning heretical tares, weeds, or indeed "cokkel") among the clean wheat of right faith: "Or springen cokkel in oure clene corn."

The significance of these interchanges should be clear. Chaucer offers us a moment in his endlink when "lollardy" is free of heresy and is a subject of interest for the Host, just before the Shipman rushes in to collapse the meaning of "lollard" and "heretic" into one. It matters less whether the Parson *really* is a "lollard," or whether the Host is right to call him one.<sup>8</sup> For Chaucer here is (like Langland in the [previous chapter](#)) imagining the social resonances of "lollardy" and is figuring in rather minute detail the larger cultural context in which "lollardy" is both an object of sympathy and scorn alike.

Yet Chaucer's idea of "lollardy," as a combination of motifs expressed by the Host and Shipman, does not end on an acerbic note. That is, the Shipman does not get the last word. After correcting the Host, he promises to tell a tale, in keeping with the original agreement of the pilgrims: "My joly body schal a tale telle, / And I schal clynken you so mery a belle, / That I schal waken al this compaignie" (1186; cf. 6.331). If the Shipman can utter the most orthodox of stereotypes against heretics who would "springen cokkel in oure clene corn," he can also embody another stereotype from very different quarters. By ambitiously wishing to be the bell of the entire "compaignie," "clynking" a tale in the process, the Shipman personifies a Wycliffite critique about pilgrimages as noisy affairs with bells aringing, as exemplified in the words of the Wycliffite priest William Thorpe, complaining about "þe gingelynge of Cantirbirie bellis" in his own remarks on the malpractices of pilgrimages.<sup>9</sup> The Shipman, plainly, is a figure Wycliffites love to hate, and not simply because he is a hostile twit. If there is indeed a "lollard joke" in Chaucer's work, it is here, in Chaucer's jab at a virulent orthodoxy that cannot tolerate anything but its own self-image, out of which proceed the very things it addictively despises.<sup>10</sup>

My reason for focusing so long on this well-known passage is that even in the case of Chaucer we must not assume that all references to "lollards" are flat or even hostile. The Host's gesture of sympathy to, and identification with, the Parson has been missed in criticism, perhaps on account of the critical assumption that no person in his or her right mind would exhibit or announce such interest in hearing the Parson preach a seemingly "lollard" "predicacioun." And what of Chaucer? He, like Langland, can clearly discern the debate about "lollardy" and boil it down to its essence in so many words. I think it is right to conclude that Chaucer's treatment of "lollardy" in the small passage of poetry is indicative of his interests in Wycliffism, his proximity to Wycliffite ideas: he knows not only the cultural conversation revolving around Wycliffite heresy (as above) but also something about Wycliffite polemic, as his *Canterbury Tales* lead us to believe.<sup>11</sup> Can more be said? Indeed, yes, if we move our inquiry beyond that great work, beyond the now expected topics of religious polemic and ecclesiastical satire, and the usual forms of Chaucerian humor and irony. By looking outside of the *Tales*, we will find that the poet's relationship to Wycliffism is greater than and different from what we have taken it to be – bound up, as I will argue below, with Wycliffism's most lasting contribution to English letters: the Wycliffite vernacular bible. This chapter will identify distinctively Wycliffite ideas in Chaucer's longest piece of original prose, the Prologue to the *Treatise on the Astrolabe*, and will show how Wycliffism supplied the poet with ways of fashioning himself as a vernacular *auctor*, deft at the tasks of English translation. The so-called "Father of English poetry" gets an English lesson from the Wycliffites.

#### CHAUCER'S WYCLIFFITE TEXT AND CONTEXT

My argument about the Prologue to the *Treatise on the Astrolabe* takes place against the background of the poet's friends, readers, and audience. It is no secret that persons within "Chaucer's circle" were interested in writing, collecting, and (possibly) funding the production of vernacular religious literature, inclusive of Wycliffite texts. Indeed, the very phrase, "Chaucer's circle," as defined by Paul Strohm, would lack any meaning absent of these individuals, some of whom are referred to as "lollard knights."<sup>12</sup> For instance, as a so-called "lollard knight," Sir John Clanvowe demonstrated a literary relation to Chaucer when he wrote his *Boke of Cupide* in imitation of the poet's own verse; he also struck out on his own in writing *The Two Ways*, which discusses "lollardy"

(see Chapter 3, 50–51). Clanvowe's heir, Thomas Clanvowe, owned Wycliffite catechetical and scriptural material, judging from the books his widow Perrin Clanvowe listed in her will – among them, *Pore Caitif* and “four quayres of Doctoures on Mathewe,” which, as Margaret Aston and Colin Richmond surmise, “might well have been part of the Wycliffite glossed gospels.”<sup>13</sup> Thomas probably inherited these from John. In the knowledge that such Wycliffite scriptural translations were never far out of reach for Chaucer, we can note that even the *Pore Caitif* – that moveable rubric under which a variety of orthodox and Wycliffite texts are collected – contains, as in the cases of Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Additional B.66, fols. 90r–91v, and London, British Library, MS Harley 2322, fols. 87r–88r, Wycliffite tracts rationalizing the Englishing of Latin religious works. Chaucer's knowledge of tracts like these, and his access to Wycliffite scriptural materials, is the subject of this chapter.<sup>14</sup>

Meanwhile, other details broaden this picture of persons in the upper gentry in Chaucer's circle taking a real interest in Wycliffite scriptural texts, including the Duke of Gloucester, Thomas Woodstock, who owned an early version of the Wycliffite Bible (London, British Library, MSS Egerton 617 and 618) and possibly two Wycliffite glossed gospels.<sup>15</sup> Thomas Latimer, also identified as a “lollard knight,” is a revealing case. He was ordered to appear before a king's commission “with certain books and pamphlets in his custody concerning the error and perverse doctrine of the catholic faith.”<sup>16</sup> It is not certain why this commission arose during the Merciless Parliament and, as Maureen Jurkowski notes, “[n]o serious consequences appear to have resulted.”<sup>17</sup> But the idea that Latimer had something to do with the production of Wycliffite texts seems reliable: Anne Hudson suggests that Latimer might have financed a major Wycliffite scriptorium at Braybrooke (his seat), housing at least forty-seven scribes and containing a “fairly extensive library of Latin theology” able to support the production of multiple copies of the finely wrought English sermon cycle.<sup>18</sup>

That these persons were squarely within “Chaucer's circle” is not debatable.<sup>19</sup> That vernacular Wycliffite texts were circulating among this group and available to the poet seems also to be the right conclusion.<sup>20</sup> As Ralph Hanna reminds us, “[t]hose who wanted vernacular books in the Middle Ages had to set about getting them in a context where only personal contact . . . allowed acquisition of a text.”<sup>21</sup> What is debatable, however, is the relevance of this circle and these literary horizons to the poet's works and words, and whether Chaucer would perceive any need to read Wycliffite texts. Critics have persuasively shown that Chaucer was

aware of some of the finer details of Wycliffite polemic.<sup>22</sup> Yet we must at some stage accept that he got these Wycliffite ideas not from the banter about London or Oxford but rather from *specific* vernacular Wycliffite texts.<sup>23</sup> We ought to begin to consider which texts those might be.

In pursuit of this effort, this chapter explores the significance of Chaucer's use of a cluster of ideas and phrases that can be found only in one Chaucerian text – the Prologue to the *Treatise on the Astrolabe* – and only in one Wycliffite text, the General Prologue to the Wycliffite Bible, a fifteen-chapter vernacular statement on scriptural exegesis appended mostly to select, later versions (LV) of the Wycliffite Bible.<sup>24</sup> The Wycliffite General Prologue ends with a signal statement about new forms of idiomatic translation that Chaucer, I will suggest, found useful for his own purposes of promoting his work – namely, to explain his own idiomatic translation of the *Treatise*, which shows a marked improvement in method over the earlier and more literally rendered, *Boece*.<sup>25</sup> Why Chaucer would turn to this Wycliffite model is easy to see: the Wycliffite General Prologue is one of the earliest and most expansive attempts in the European tradition both to theorize prose translation and to offer prescriptions for the practice itself, as evidenced only briefly in such later works as Dom Eduarte's fifteenth-century, *A arte de traduzir latim*, and Étienne Dolet's sixteenth-century, *La manière de bien traduire d'une langue en aultre c.1540*.<sup>26</sup> Were the poet looking for ideas about vernacular translation theory, he would need to look no further than the Wycliffite General Prologue. Chaucer's longest piece of original prose – the Prologue to the *Treatise* – happens to be less than original in certain key ways, then. Indeed, our identifying the Prologue to the *Treatise* as Chaucer's own "Wycliffite text" will supply some historical specificity to our sense of the poet's sources of vernacular inspiration.<sup>27</sup>

#### WYCLIFFISM: THE HERESY OF THE VERNACULAR?

An argument that Chaucer adopted portions of an English text, much less a Wycliffite text, has been a long time coming. Laura Hibbard Loomis was the last scholar to assert that Chaucer read and adapted bits of English romances that appear in the Auchinleck Manuscript (National Library of Scotland, MS Advocates 19.2.1).<sup>28</sup> The rarity of such an inquiry is not for want of critical interest in the question of Chaucer and Wycliffism – there is plenty. And it never helps such an inquiry that Chaucer himself is less than clear about his sources, ever inclined to conceal them no matter their provenance or popularity. But there are also paradigmatic obstacles



keeping us from pursuing the links between Chaucer and his Wycliffite contemporaries on the question of English translation and vernacular hermeneutics.

There are two main obstacles, as I see them. The first, and by far the more pervasive, is the idea that Chaucer is only interested in continental models of vernacularity to the exclusion of English ones. I will address this assumption in the course of my argument, in which Wycliffite and continental models are evaluated in tandem for their relative utility for Chaucer to explain his method of translation in the Prologue to the *Treatise*. The second assumption is that vernacular writing and theorizing had heretical, if not Wycliffite, implications after the Blackfriars Council in 1382 and that an author who mirrors Wycliffite hermeneutic procedures would meet serious consequences at the hands of ecclesiastical authorities: Chaucer might be putting himself at risk by adopting Wycliffite models of vernacular translation and affiliating himself with what is, in essence, an “English heresy,” to borrow Hudson’s phrase. Indeed, Hudson argues that vernacularity was a distinctive feature of Wycliffism and that the authorities singled out the act of writing in English as conducive to heresy.<sup>29</sup> It is true that Wycliffites promoted vernacular religious writing – both the English scriptures and vernacular exegesis and catechetical instruction – but in the spirit of my previous chapters, in which we closely attended to the processes of heretication at the Blackfriars Council in 1382 and thereafter, we can make some qualifying claims about the purported English heresy of Wycliffism and question the idea that, as Michael J. Bennett suggests, the “condemnation of Wycliffism in 1382 had created a less favorable climate for English works.”<sup>30</sup>

To begin with, the Blackfriars Council, which condemned as heretical and erroneous twenty-four opinions associated with the work of John Wyclif and his followers, pursued no broad agenda to censure vernacular religious writing or, as has been the general view in criticism, to place “powerful constraints on the writing of satire and theological statement.”<sup>31</sup> The Council did not mandate standing commissions to perform such censorship. Nor did it indicate that Wycliffism was a heresy of the vernacular. All official proclamations about books and pamphlets were directed at Wyclif and the Wycliffites by name. And these Wycliffite writings were proscribed either without any mention of the language in which they were written, or by mentioning two languages at once, English and Latin.<sup>32</sup> English was not singled out for special notice, in other words. And even when Archbishop Thomas Arundel, nearly twenty-five years later, issued his Provincial Constitutions (1407/09), of which the sixth

constitution similarly names John Wyclif, he omitted any reference to language: "nullus libellus sive tractatus per Johannem Wycliff, aut alium quemcunque, . . . amodo legatur in scholis, aulis, hospitiiis, seu aliis locis quibuscunque . . . nisi per universitatem Oxonii aut Cantabrigiae . . . primitus examinetur [no book or treatise made by John Wyclif, or other whomever, . . . be henceforth read in schools, halls, hospitals, or other places whatsoever . . . except first it be examined by the University of Oxford or Cambridge]." <sup>33</sup> From the Blackfriars Council to Arundel's Constitutions, the problem was the heretical message, not the medium – despite the fact that canon law did record precedents for legal action against heretics availing themselves of the vernacular, such as the Waldensians. <sup>34</sup>

That English was not necessarily perceived as conducive to heretical thought, according to these authorities, is corroborated in prosecutions against heretical suspects. Bishops' courtbooks (rare survivals that these are) do not assess the Wycliffite program for vernacular religious writing as a point of heretical doctrine per se like "lollard" eucharistic teachings; bishops did not question suspects on their views of vernacularity, in other words. And where Wycliffites offer prepared answers to members of their group so that they can effectively respond to bishops' interrogations, they forgo mentioning a defense of Englishing the scriptures. <sup>35</sup> I know of no instance in which a suspect justifies the Englishing of scripture in the theoretical terms that the Wycliffites had posed in late fourteenth- and early fifteenth-century tracts such as those found in Cambridge University Library MS Ii.6.26. <sup>36</sup> An exception can be found in the early sixteenth-century case of Richard Hunne, as recorded in some notes in Dublin, Trinity College, MS 775 (D.3.4), fol. 124v: "he defendeth the translation of the Bible and holy scripture into English tong." <sup>37</sup> But that moment in history is very different from Chaucer's own, and one from which we should not extrapolate in seeking to suggest that the English vernacular was somehow inherently radical or heretical, full of Wycliffite potential. <sup>38</sup> And if I may be allowed an *occupatio*, there is no need to mention that commonly cited example of Chaucer's own *Canterbury Tales* used as evidence in the heresy trial of John Baron of Amersham in 1464. <sup>39</sup> It is an exception that proves no rule.

We may indeed wish to reconcile Archbishop Arundel's attempt in his Constitutions to license (not eliminate) scriptural translation with what we know about the status of English books within heresy trials and the winning popularity of the Wycliffite Bible since the 1380s. In the first instance it is helpful to bear in mind Shannon McSheffrey's conclusion that "[f]urther investigation . . . shows that neither wills nor the ownership

of English scriptures and devotional works are good indicators of heretical leanings in this period, [1486–1522],” and they were not, I add, in Chaucer’s.<sup>40</sup> It is important to note, moreover, that over the course of time between Chaucer and the heretics of Coventry in the early sixteenth century, the Wycliffite English Bible found greater audiences among orthodox persons especially, despite Arundel’s attempt to restrict the circulation of this vernacular work. Hanna arrives at the appropriate conclusions regarding the over 250 surviving manuscripts of the Wycliffite Bible: “Rather than heresy,” the Wycliffite Bible was “the only game in town . . . [T]he Lollard bible was a huge success . . . The translation, in fact, turned out to be so good an idea that, whatever official pronouncements said, it could be re-appropriated to orthodoxy and used, without particular anxiety, as a convenient consultation text.”<sup>41</sup> And to this we can add that the more codified or disciplined forms of Wycliffite vernacularity, as presented in the Wycliffite General Prologue and as extracted by Chaucer, are open to consideration by perfectly orthodox persons, even schoolmen at Oxford University, such as Richard Ullerston, writing at the center of heresy’s emergence in England.<sup>42</sup> Wycliffism availed itself of vernacular and Latin opportunities, but it is not a “heresy of the vernacular” in any real sense of the phrase. Chaucer could explore Wycliffite vernacularity with impunity and interest – an exploration of which we shall now take stock.

#### CHAUCER’S WYCLIFFITE TRANSLATION THEORY

In the Prologue to the *Treatise on the Astrolabe*, Chaucer announces his gift of an astrolabe to his son Lewis, explaining to him the varieties of astronomy and the nature of the accompanying operating instructions, the *Treatise* itself, which is translated from Latin sources.<sup>43</sup> Chaucer’s explanation soon turns into a discussion of the capabilities of English as a language of learning and of the mechanics of translation itself:

This tretis, divided in 5 parties, wol I shewe the under full light reules and naked wordes in Englissh, for Latyn canst thou yit but small, my litel sone. But natheles suffice to the these trewe conclusions in Englissh as wel as sufficith to these noble clerkes Grekes these same conclusions in Grek; and to Arabiens in Arabik, and to Jewes in Ebrew, and to Latyn folk in Latyn; which Latyn folk had hem first out of othere dyverse langages, and writen hem in her owne tunge, that is to seyn, in Latyn. And God woot that in alle these langages and in many moo han these conclusions ben suffisantly lerned and taught, and yit by diverse reules; right as diverse pathes leden diverse folk the righte way to Rome. (25–40)

Here begins Chaucer's reflection on translation. Innocent as this statement seems, its vocabulary is quite striking, because Chaucer appears to echo important Wycliffite expressions. Not the least of these is "naked wordes," which, as I have shown elsewhere, is a very common pejorative within Wycliffite vernacular hermeneutics and is not to be mistaken for that *faux-amis* much touted by scholars, the "naked text," which is an orthodox caricature of Wycliffite hermeneutic practices as fundamentalist.<sup>44</sup> Having claimed that his English is but "naked wordes," already drawing on Wycliffite locutions, Chaucer must continue, in the Prologue, to assure Lewis that the translation will be gainful and that the vernacular can convey scientific principles. To do so, he explains that, throughout literary history, translation has abetted the learning and teaching of astronomy. In particular, when he writes, "sufficith to these noble clerkes Grekes these same conclusions in Grek; and to Arabiens in Arabik, and to Jewes in Ebrew, and to Latyn folk in Latyn," he seeks to explain a theory of linguistic equivalence that has preoccupied medieval and modern commentators alike. It is an idea that Benjamin idealized, Quine contested, and Augustine prayed for: "Intus utique mihi, intus in domicilio cogitationis nec hebraea nec graeca nec latina nec barbara ueritas . . . diceret [Within me, within the lodging of my thinking, there would speak a truth which is neither Hebrew nor Greek nor Latin nor any barbarian tongue]."<sup>45</sup> Why do truths move between languages? Because the "res ipsa [the thing itself]," as Augustine averred, "nec graeca nec latina est [is neither Greek or Latin]."<sup>46</sup> Chaucer subscribes, in part, to this *Ding an sich* notion of things and language in his suggestion that essential truths, in this case astronomical "conclusions," are symmetrically expressed in all languages. This is not surprising, as Augustine's ideas were central to most medieval theories of translation.<sup>47</sup>

Yet Chaucer is not only toeing an Augustinian line. Rather, he has at hand an entire history of translation theory that offers ways of talking about the transmission of words, grammars, and exemplars from Hebrew and Greek to Latin.<sup>48</sup> Writers of the many *accessus ad auctores* typically speak of translation in the context of etymology, tracing the meaning of terms through these languages: "This book is entitled *Phisiologus*. *Phisis* in Greek is *natura* ('nature') in Latin, *logos* in Greek is *sermo* ('discourse') in Latin."<sup>49</sup> Commentators often follow the same standard.<sup>50</sup> Others, such as Hugh of St. Victor and Vincent of Beauvais, drew from the tropes of *translatio studii* to speak more broadly about the translation of scriptural and secular learning.<sup>51</sup> For instance, Hugh says that Plato "first introduced

logic [logicam rationalem] to the Greeks . . . Marcus Terentius Varro first translated [transtulit] dialectic from Greek into Latin . . . Demosthenes, the son of a carpenter, is believed to have discovered rhetoric among the Greeks, Tisias among the Latins, Corax among the Syracusans. Rhetoric was written in Greek by Aristotle, Gorgias, and Hermagoras, and translated [translata] into Latin by Tully, Quintillian, and Titian.”<sup>52</sup> This convention of enumerating the learned languages and *auctores* persisted, even when Grosseteste,<sup>53</sup> Bacon,<sup>54</sup> and Dante<sup>55</sup> were upsetting the received wisdom about translation and equivalence.<sup>56</sup> By the time Boccaccio had penned his praise of Dante and his vernacular achievements, *Trattatello in laude di Dante*, these austere conventions were the mainstay of biography and authorial praise.<sup>57</sup> Dante “trained many scholars in poetry, especially in the vernacular,” which “he first exalted and brought into repute amongst us Italians, no otherwise than did Homer his amongst the Greeks, or Virgil his amongst the Latins.”<sup>58</sup>

Yet Chaucer is also literally writing himself out of or, better, away from this tradition. For instance, in lines 29–40 of the Prologue, contrary to the commonplaces of *translatio studii*, he keeps his “noble clerkes” anonymous, leaving ambiguity as to whether they are “olde astrologiens” (62), contemporary science-minded friars, “J. Somer” and “N. Lenne” (85–86), or others having nothing to do with astronomy. There is no “Fraunceys Petrak, the lauriat poete” (4.31) or “the grete poete of Ytaille / That highte Dant” (7.2460–61). There is no catalogue of authorities as given at the end of *Troilus*, where he commends his “litel book” to be “subgit . . . to all poesy; / And kis the steppes where as thou seest pace / Virgile, Ovide, Omer, Lucan, and Stace” (Book V.1790–92). With no authorities of “poesye” to name – not even with classical pseudonyms, as when he calls Boccaccio “Lollius” (*Troilus*, Book I.394) – there are none toward which to grovel. And as if to secure this exclusion of the figures of “poesia” enumerated by Boccaccio and countless others, Chaucer occludes the European vernaculars, placing them under the generalized rubric of “many moo” (37) languages. Consequently, he not only obscures an investment in the authorities evoked by these languages (Jean de Meun, Dante, Boccaccio, *et al.*) but also his own practical experience as a translator and adaptor of French and Italian poetry. His bracketing of the practices and conventions pertaining to “poesye” is all the more pronounced in view of the fact that in his posture as a translator, he is neither baldly skeptical about whether English can “folowe word by word the curiosite” of French verse, as is the speaker in “The Complaint of

Venus" (81), nor glibly optimistic about verse translation like his narrator in *Troilus*, who dares to translate "naught oonly the sentence" (1.393) of Troilus's song but also "every word" (1.397) – a view that is sustainable only by suspending the problem linguistic difference ("save oure tonges difference" [1.395]). Rather, in the Prologue, Chaucer takes the prosaic middle way. He heeds linguistic difference productively, suggesting that even though the "divers reules" of one language can not be translated, the "conclusions" can.<sup>59</sup>

We can interpret Chaucer's changes to the conventions of *translatio studii* and poetic *inventio* as either unremarkable – chalking them up, in other words, as no changes at all – or as an accommodation of ideas and influences not entirely assimilable to what we expect are the received models for translation.<sup>60</sup> It is possible that here Chaucer engages different authorities – namely those who endeavor to justify and improve models for rendering English prose per se. Those authorities are the Wycliffites. Critics have speculated about the relationship between Chaucer's languages analogy in the Prologue to the *Treatise* and that of the Wycliffites. For instance, Alcuin Blamires writes that a "supposition that Chaucer himself sympathized with the campaign for an English Bible could be derived from the way in which he justifies his use of the vernacular in the Prologue to the *Treatise on the Astrolabe*."<sup>61</sup> Hanna situates the Prologue in relation to Wycliffite tracts sponsoring scriptural translation.<sup>62</sup> Tim William Machan regards this text as parallel in aims to the General Prologue to the Wycliffite Bible.<sup>63</sup>

Regularly rendering excerpts of the Vulgate for his own poems, Chaucer was indeed probably aware of how the Wycliffites theorized and justified biblical translation to their critics, who feared that English Vulgates were bereft of the salvific truths inherent in the Latin.<sup>64</sup> The Wycliffites, arguing that all "langages" are equally suitable biblical vernaculars, selected and analogized several (Greek, Hebrew, Latin, Italian, French, Spanish, German, Dutch) to prove the assertion that "þe troupe of God stondiþ not in oo langage more þan in anoþer."<sup>65</sup> The General Prologue to the Wycliffite Bible provides a good (if not the best) example of this argument in its last chapter, where the author addresses an objection from "worldli clerkis," who:<sup>66</sup>

axen gretli what spiryt makip idiotis hardi to translate now þe Bible into English, siþen þe foure greete doctouris dursten neuere do þis. Pis replicacioun is so lewid þat it nedip noon answer, no but stilnesse eithir curteys scorn. For þese greete doctouris weren noone English men, neither þei weren conuersaunt among English men neipir in caas þei kouden þe langage of English. But þei ceessiden neuere til þei hadden holi writ in here modir tunge of here owne puple.

"Who are the real 'idiotis'?" the Wycliffite writer would reply. Certainly not the "fourre greete doctouris." Even though they were not "English men" nor "þei kouden þe langage of English," they were translators by default of their own role as exegetes, rendering "holi writ in here modir tunge of here owne puple." This Wycliffite then continues to reply to the boorish "replicacioun," by picking out for comment two "greete doctouris" in particular:

[f]or Ierom, þat was a Latyn man of birthe, translatide þe Bible boþe out of Ebru and out of Greek into Latyn, and expounide ful myche þerto. And Austyn and manie mo Latyns expouniden þe Bible for manie partis in Latyn, to Latyn men among whiche þei dwelliden. And Latyn was a comoun langage to here puple aboute Rome and bizondis and on þis half, as Englishe is comoun langage to oure puple.<sup>67</sup>

The Wycliffite writer turns to precedent, taking up the *translatio studii* conventions of authorial praise and of the transmission of learning, and reconfiguring them into a polemic that rationalizes a translation that is thought by "worldli clerkis" to have no precedent at all. But the fact that Jerome and Augustine put scripture "in here modir tunge" allows the Wycliffites to do so in English.

Chaucer has a similar rationale, not polemical so much as explanatory. He supplies a litany of "noble clerks" who believed that astronomical "conclusions" could subsist in "her owne tunge," and then proclaims the inevitability of translation, that "Latyn folk had hem [conclusions] first out of othere dyverse langages, and writen hem in her owne tunge, that is to seyn in Latyn." He can justify Latin to English translation because of precedent, because these "Latyn folk" themselves translated "out of othere dyverse langages" – of course, Hebrew and Greek. In this formulation, Chaucer's "Latin folk" look less like anonymous astronomers or continental *auctores* and more like Augustine and, especially, Jerome, who, as the Wycliffites have it, "translatide the bible, bothe out of Ebru and out of Greek, into Latyn." Chaucer thus reconfigures the conventions of *translatio studii* in ways parallel to the Wycliffite translators, who position Jerome and Augustine in a moment analogous to their own in the history of scriptural translation and vernacular exegesis. Even though Chaucer displaces altogether references both to the scriptural interpreters and to scripture itself – leaving only an echo in lines 62–64 of that much used passage, Romans 15.4 ("For what things soever were written were written for our instruction") – he appears to adopt the salient terms of scriptural translation in English to rationalize secular translation, a move which puts him in company with that other contemporary translator, John Trevisa,



who in justifying his *Polychronicon*, writes: "Also holy wryt was translated out of Hebrew ynto Gru and out of Gru into Latyn and þanne out of Latyn ynto Frensch. Panne what haþ Englysch trespased þat hyt myȝt noȝt be translated into Englysch?"<sup>68</sup> More on Trevisa below.

No wonder, then, that Chaucer continues to pursue these scriptural terms when he apologizes for his product:

Now wol I preie mekely every discret persone that redith or herith this litel tretys to have my rude endityng for excusid, and my superfluite of wordes, for two causes. The firste cause is for that curious endityng and hard sentence is ful hevy at onys for such a child to lerne. And the seconde cause is this, that sothly me semith better to writen unto a child twyes a god sentence, than he forget it onys. (41–44)

We may again take stock of the longer history of translation theory before turning specifically to what would seem to be the Wycliffite models in these lines. In claiming to have but no choice to render a "superfluite of wordes" (43–44) in his translation, Chaucer proclaims an interest in idiomatic translation. Indeed, he evokes the "sense for sense" term of the ever-common Hieronymian binary, "sense for sense," "word for word."<sup>69</sup> Frequently, translators remark upon the distinction not only to speak about translation but to mark occasions and nod to patrons. Perhaps the best example for comparison to Chaucer's Prologue, as Chaucer did indeed read this text when translating *Boece*, is Jean de Meun's *Livres de confort*, especially the preface addressing Philip IV. Jean, like Chaucer, explains that he sought to avoid a "mot a mot [word for word]" translation but that in so doing he might have erred in the other extreme and offered too many words: "que je me soie trop eslongniés des paroles de l'auteur ou que je aie mis aucunes fois plus de paroles que li auteur [that I strayed too far from the words of the author himself or that I have sometimes put more words than the author]".<sup>70</sup> Both Chaucer and Jean risk verbosity so as to suit their translations for their audience: Chaucer's wish to write clearly for a child, in other words, mirrors Jean's concerns to be clear for the "gens lais et li clers [lay person and clerk]."

Yet if translators are indeed dealing with such common problems, they may also express the ramifications of such problems in local terms, specific to their own vernacular. Chaucer's depiction of his own limitations as a translator whose indiscretion renders a "superfluite of wordes" resonates meaningfully within the specific contexts of vernacular hermeneutics that the Wycliffites were shaping.<sup>71</sup> The Wycliffites commonly associate "superfluous words" with illegitimate discursive practices, beginning with those misreadings of scripture that find some gospel stories to be redundant



or “superflu,” or those priestly interpretations in which Christ’s “wordus semon superflu.”<sup>72</sup> (Indeed, “Christis word” is never “superflu” but abundantly sentential.<sup>73</sup>) Not surprisingly, in this light, the Wycliffites criticize the textual frauds of friars, whose “lettres [of fraternyte] ben superflaw” because they are “[f]eyned.”<sup>74</sup> Fully appreciating how central this locution is to theorizing words and meanings, the Wycliffites also use it to express the degrees of difference between modes of translating from Latin to English, a difference that boils down to (what else?) “wordis”:

First it is to knowe þat þe beste translating is, out of Latyn into English, to translate aftir þe sentence and not oneli aftir þe wordis, so þat þe sentence be as opin, eiþer openere in English as in Latyn, and go not fer fro þe lettre; and if þe lettre mai not be suid in þe translating, let þe sentence euere be hool and open, for þe wordis owen to serue to þe entent and sentence, and ellis þe wordis ben superflu eiþer false.<sup>75</sup>

This Wycliffite replaces the Hieronymian commonplace about “word for word” and “sense for sense” translation with a more dialectical consideration: “beste translating” is not “oneli aftir þe wordis” but also not “fer fro þe lettre.” This is not a contradiction but rather a way of licensing the authority of the translator, of advancing his or her primary aim to “let þe sentence euere be hool and open,” and of cautioning against the worst of renderings, in which the “wordis ben superflu eiþer false.” The author likely distills these values from the collective experience and practice of Wycliffite translation itself, the years of revising and ironing out the faults of the first too literal, biblical translation into a second, more idiomatic and “open” version.<sup>76</sup> What results is an account of the protocol for “beste translating”:

First þis symple creature hadde myche trauaile wiþ diuerse felawis and helperis to gedere manie elde biblis, and opere doctouris and comune glosis, and to make oo Latyn bible sumdel trewe; and þanne to studie it of þe newe, þe texte wiþ the glose, and opere doctouris as he miȝte gete, and speciali Lire on the elde testamēt þat helpide ful myche þis werk. Þe þridde tyme to counseile wiþ elde gramariens and elde dyuynis of harde wordis and harde sentencis, hou þo miȝten best be vnderstonen and translatid. Þe fourþe tyme to translate as cleerli as he coude to þe sentence.<sup>77</sup>

Translation of the idiomatic sort requires, in short, a good deal of interpretation of Latinate “hard sentencis” of scripture before they can become intelligible “sentences” in clear English prose absent of “superfluous” verbiage.<sup>78</sup>

Chaucer, again, seems to know these terms of value and the proper distinctions between modes. For example, he frames the problem of

discursive excess through the phrase, “a superfluite of wordes,” and explains that a discriminating audience of “every discret persone that redith or herith this litel tretys” may (mis)perceive these “wordes” as interpretive blunders, as nothing more than Chaucer taking unwarranted liberties in expanding the English far beyond the Latin sense. His point, however, is to argue against the facile and finally false perception of “superfluity,” emphasizing instead that his “firste” concern is not to sustain a misplaced belief in “faithful translation” (which at any rate obscures a host of synchronic and diachronic problems, as well the economies or “energies” of meaning, confronting the translator<sup>79</sup>) but rather a commitment to resolve the Latinate “hard sentence” (45), translating in such a way as to free Lewis from the heaviest burden of interpretation – for “curious endityng and hard sentence is ful hevy at onys for such a child to lerne.”<sup>80</sup> Once having taken up these terms, Chaucer then opines about which practice works best: “sothly me semith *better* to writen unto a child twyes a god sentence, than he forget it onys” (44, my emphasis; see *Treatise*, 2.2.13). He has already made this point, but here he says it differently, taking up the comparative degree to signal an understanding about the degrees of translation. Clearly, some practices are “better” than others. “[B]etter” than what, however? Better than a rendering that aspires to communicate the “sentence” *not* “twyes,” that is, word for word – a rendering without idiomatic (re) arrangement or expansion.<sup>81</sup> Chaucer only obliquely refers to the Hieronymian “word” for “word” commonplace, in other words. For he is working here within a new set of terms, casting himself as the negotiator of “hard sentence,” the maker of a “superfluite of wordes,” but finally the doer of “better” translating. However much he questions his ability to translate using the “full light reules and naked wordes in Englissh,” he ultimately regards his English as having as much subtlety and truth value as Latin: “And Lowys, yf so be that I shewe the in my lighte Englissh as trewe conclusions touching this mater, and not oonly as trewe but as many and as subtile conclusions, as ben shewid in Latyn . . . , konne me the more thank” (50–55). Such optimism about his ability to translate “openly” and expand “sentences” echoes, again, the desired achievements and conclusions expressed by the Wycliffite writer: “At þe bigynnyng I purposide wiþ Goddis helpe to make þe sentence as trewe and open in English as it is in Latyn, eiþer more trewe and more open þan it is in Latyn.”<sup>82</sup> When it comes to modifying the received conventions of *translatio studii* and Jerome, Chaucer and the Wycliffites are remarkably similar.

These parallel modifications are effected through strikingly similar language. We can therefore begin to consider seriously that Chaucer

assumes the posture of a translator influenced by some patently Wycliffite ideas. Both Chaucer and the Wycliffite translator(s) appear to operate within the same standards of judgment about “superfluity” *vis-à-vis* the “hard sentence,” “hard sentencis.” Both juxtapose these standards with another explanation of translation, the analogy of languages, the very motif that some critics believe links Chaucer to Wycliffite translation theory. And both similarly announce the benefits of “open” translation:<sup>83</sup> for the Wycliffite, a text “as trewe and open in English as it is in Latyn”; for Chaucer, “as trewe but as many and as subtile conclusions, as ben shewid in Latyn.” Clearly, these facts draw together the Prologue and the Wycliffite General Prologue in ways more significant than the suggestion that Chaucer here, as in his *Tales*, simply cottons onto Wycliffite slogans. There is not only a match of terms between texts but parallels in association, arrangement, and purpose.<sup>84</sup> This degree of similarity needs greater attention, for it appears that these texts are in dialogue. To account for these parallels, I am interested in whether or not Chaucer could have consulted this Wycliffite work and used its salient terms and ideas to shape his own discourse about translation in the Prologue – an idea that might well seem persuasive in view of the fact that none of these terms appear in Chaucer’s other works, a fact that supports the case that the poet is drawing from new sources to think specifically about vernacular translation. The dating of both texts, furthermore, allows for the possibility that Chaucer could have read the Wycliffite General Prologue.<sup>85</sup> The literary interests of Chaucer’s circle, in which Wycliffite texts circulated, only strengthens the possibility. Yet to secure the “Chaucer could have” component of this proposition, we must assess the distinctiveness of these terms in vernacular parlance, testing the reliability of lexical evidence in order to account for the degree to which these terms can be considered Wycliffite in the first place, as well as linked to a specific text, the Wycliffite General Prologue. Then I will move to explore the conceptual distinctiveness of Wycliffite vernacular translation, its possible relations with the work of John Trevisa, and its situation at the beginning of a new literary history itself – that of the Middle English grammatical text.

#### WYCLIFFITE WORDS

The verbal and conceptual similarities between Chaucer’s Prologue and the Wycliffite General Prologue provide occasion for us to review some of the advantages and disadvantages of a prevalent methodology in

Wycliffite studies and in the criticism of Chaucer – a methodology inspired by an important article by Anne Hudson entitled, “A Lollard Sect Vocabulary?”. Hudson takes as her point of departure the remarks of monastic chronicler, Henry Knighton, who observed that the Wycliffites had, effectively, “*unum modum . . . loquelae* [one way of speaking].”<sup>86</sup> She finds that Knighton’s claim, and even the words he identifies as “Wycliffite,” are corroborated in Wycliffite texts themselves; the Wycliffites repeat, time and again, terms such as “trewe prechours,” “Goddiss law,” and “ground.”<sup>87</sup> Hudson argues that such terms could signal “Lollard” sect affiliations or an interest in Wycliffite theology. What I wish to emphasize here, however, is the irony: the incessant repetition of terms works against their insularity and, rather, serves as a means by which non-Wycliffites come to notice them and, as the case may be, adopt or vilify them. So when writers use these same terms, sometimes exorbitantly, they are not necessarily revealing their special access to Wycliffite discourse nor flagging some kind of covert Wycliffism.<sup>88</sup> We should not, therefore, use Hudson’s article, and the terms therein, as a diagnostic toolbox to determine which text is Wycliffite and which is not. Furthermore, that kind of diagnosis, which some Chaucerians perform on Chaucer’s characters, cannot establish anything conclusive about the poet’s relationship to Wycliffism.<sup>89</sup>

But there is a way around these problems, and it begins with the acknowledgment that many Wycliffite terms, modes of expression, and ideas did not show up in non-Wycliffite contexts or very rarely so. Such restricted discursive situations should not be hard to imagine if we are to retain “Wycliffite” as having any explanatory force. Indeed, such a restricted situation is in evidence here. For instance, the phrase, “superfluous words” had a rather limited circulation, even within Wycliffism. Wyclif, by no means the inventor of the scholastic expression, “*superfluis verbis*,” used it in his sermons to speak about scriptural interpretation, gospel harmonizing, and misleading (fraternal) interpretive and discursive practices. Wycliffites, who adapted Wyclif’s sermons in large measure for their own vernacular sermon cycle, of course mimicked many of their master’s hermeneutic strategies; in this case, like Wyclif, they understood the expression to be bound up with the exercise of reconciling a scriptural “sentence” with its “words.”<sup>90</sup> The Wycliffite translators appreciated these strategies, using the expression in their General Prologue to speak about the faulty practice of having “superfluous words” exceed a given “sentence.” While it is evident that terms moved between different Wycliffian/-ite textual environments, those terms,

nonetheless, were relatively restricted and particularized. That these terms appeared in English as calques lends credence to the idea that their force, along with their textual locations, were tagged: Latinate, academic, hermeneutic, Wycliffite. But such exclusivity of Wycliffite usage is really no surprise, because not everyone in the late medieval scene was performing Wycliffite exegesis nor wanting to imitate the idioms of Wycliffite textual practice. What's more, this particular register of terms and ideas emerged in the 1380s, at a moment when scholastic Latin and English were gaining greater exposure to one another. It therefore makes sense that there are (so far as I can tell) no prior, *vernacular* occurrences or any use of the adjective "superfluity" attached to any noun denoting discursive activities; none were used in the context of translation (or any other context).<sup>91</sup> Even other Wycliffite tracts on translation, including the early fifteenth-century collection in Cambridge University Library, MS Ii.6.26, identified as the last surviving assortment of such tracts, do not repeat the Wycliffite General Prologue's details about translating "hard sentences" and avoiding "superfluous words," because these tracts are less technically concerned.<sup>92</sup> "Superfluous words" is a good marker of usages restricted to Wycliffite texts in the 1390s. It is for this reason that Chaucer's "superfluite of wordes," and the other expressions he uses for the first time in his oeuvre, are extensions of models circulating within Wycliffism – models fixed most handily in the Wycliffite General Prologue.

JOHN TREVISA, TRANSLATOR

Inhabiting the office of translator, Chaucer introduces into his canon new phrases and ideas by way of Wycliffism: "naked wordes," "superfluite of wordes," "hard sentence," the analogy of languages – all of which organize the main argument in his Prologue. His usage of these terms is not aleatory but rather a model that the terms express *together*, a model that signals a Wycliffite version of "open" translation. But how do we know Chaucer is not absorbing other forms of vernacular theory? It is right to wonder whether the salience of Wycliffite contributions to such theory is leveled by diachronic history, a regard for earlier traditions of translators' prologues in English. Vernacular translators have been writing prologues since the late thirteenth century; Old English examples, such as Alfred's, Wærferth's, and Ælfric's go back to the ninth and tenth centuries. While none of these examples supplies terms and arguments that match the Prologue as well as the Wycliffite General Prologue,<sup>93</sup> we may certainly want to credit Chaucer's talent for putting things together, just in the

right way, from disparate sources so as to effect an argument similar to contemporary versions.<sup>94</sup> But this is not a question of talent (which cannot stand as counter-evidence here), so much as a clearing of the ground and a focus on the real possibilities at hand. For among all the English, non-Wycliffite alternatives we could advance as a way of mitigating Wycliffism while still explaining the English theoretical terms Chaucer uses, John Trevisa offers us the needed, missing models.

In his "Dialogus inter dominum et clericum," affixed to the beginning of his *Polychronicon* (1387), Trevisa writes a rationale for secular and religious translation which is, in some ways, similar to the Wycliffite examples – most of all, his use of the languages analogy, as we saw earlier: "Also holy wryt was translated out of Hebrew ynto Gru and out of Gru into Latyn and þanne out of Latyn ynto Frensch. Panne what hap Englysch trespassed þat hyt myȝt noȝt be translated into Englysch?"<sup>95</sup> It has even been observed that Trevisa "approaches the issue [of translation] in ways parallel to Chaucer's" Prologue.<sup>96</sup> So might we consider that Trevisa, rather than the Wycliffites, influenced Chaucer, offering key terms and ideas in a "more orthodox" fashion?<sup>97</sup> As soon as we position Trevisa as the "orthodox" alternative, however, we simplify evidence and draw divisions where there may be none. This is not only to say that Trevisa omits the very expressions that link the Wycliffite General Prologue to Chaucer's Prologue – save that languages analogy used in many Wycliffite texts – but it is to say that he is by no means an uninterested party.<sup>98</sup> For introducing Trevisa into the discussion in fact admits, and even potentially supports, the possibility that he was involved in the Wycliffite translation project, as suggested by David C. Fowler.<sup>99</sup> Hudson admits to a "nagging suspicion" about the suggestion, pointing out that Trevisa translated a collection of works congruent with Wycliffite interests and was possibly using the same help texts the Wycliffites needed for their biblical rendering.<sup>100</sup> He had, in other words, the means and resources to assist the Wycliffites in certain matters of textual production. And he knew the right people, being once a resident of Queen's College with John Wyclif and Nicholas Hereford.<sup>101</sup> Yet the burden here is not to prove or disprove that Trevisa was a Wycliffite but rather to describe how the antonyms "heterodox" and "orthodox" reduce ideas to hypostatized identities and drive a wedge between respective texts and arguments that are more closely related.<sup>102</sup> If the evidence of Trevisa argues for "the centrality of Wycliffite figures and Wycliffite thought to the concerns of the late fourteenth century," as Hudson put it, then so too does the

evidence of Chaucer's Prologue demonstrates the salience of Wycliffite vernacular hermeneutics.<sup>103</sup>

#### VERNACULAR INNOVATIONS: MIDDLE ENGLISH GRAMMARS

So what, then, is "the centrality" of the Wycliffite General Prologue "to the concerns of the late fourteenth century" and what lessons in translation could Chaucer get from it that he could not get from precedent texts? Among the corpus of surviving Wycliffite texts, the General Prologue is the definitive Wycliffite statement about the theory and practice of translation.<sup>104</sup> This text is unique in its size, scope, and quantity of manuscripts (eleven) exceeding other Wycliffite tracts on translation. It consolidates vernacular, hermeneutic terms like no other contemporary English text on translation and conveys an understanding of language not duplicated until, arguably, the fifteenth-century document in London, British Library, MS Royal 17 B I.<sup>105</sup> And it is among the first works in Middle English to *prescribe* strategies for rendering Latin texts into English, of resolving into English those most difficult grammatical constructions, such as the ablative absolute, the participle, and the relative.<sup>106</sup> The novelty of such a text, then, can be made clear: while, by the 1390s, the Wycliffite General Prologue comes at the *end* of an already long tradition of translators' prologues, it also stands at the *beginning* of another tradition, that of the Middle English grammatical text.<sup>107</sup> This latter tradition started in Oxford in the late fourteenth century and impressively flourished elsewhere in the mid-fifteenth. It is of interest here because instruction in Latin grammar and the practicalities of translation are obviously linked.

The Wycliffite translators innovate much of this tradition,<sup>108</sup> laying out in their General Prologue the ways in which "superfluous words" can be avoided with the grammatical attention requisite to "open" translation: "In translating into English, manie resolucions moun make þe sentence open, as an ablatif case absolute may be resoluid into þese þre wordis, wiþ couenable verbe, *þe while, for, if*, as grammariens seyn; as þus *þe maistir redinge, I stonde mai be resoluid þus while þe maistir rediþ, I stonde eiþer if þe maistir rediþ* etc., eiþer *for þe maistir* etc." A number of similar points follow: "Also a participle of a present tens eiþer pretert, of actif vois eiþir passif, mai be resoluid into a verbe of þe same tens and a coniunccioun copulatif, as þus *dicens, þat is seiynge*, mai be resoluid þus *and seiþ eiþir þat seiþ*." The conditional mood in this section signals both what the reader may expect to find in the translator's "open" alterations – "I resolute openli



þus" – and the range of options a translator has in confronting difficult constructions. The translator (or translators) also provides a sample sentence delineating the differences in "literal translation" and "open resolution": "Also whanne riȝtful construccioun is lettid bi relacion, I resoluē openli þus: where þis reesoun *Dominum formidabunt aduersarii eius* shulde be englisshid þus bi þe lettre *þe Lord his aduersaries shulen drede*, I englishe it þus bi resolucioun *þe aduersaries of þe Lord shulen drede him*, and so of oþere resons þat ben like."<sup>109</sup> These descriptive and prescriptive grammatical modes are so essential to translation that they come up again in the closing remarks to the entire Prologue. These address the problem of "translating of wordis equiuok" – with reference to Augustine's *De Doctrina Christiana* 2.12: "As in þat place of þe Salme *þe feet of hem ben swifte to shede out blood*, þe Greek word is equiuok to *sharpe* or *swift*; and he þat translatide *sharpe feet* erride, and a book þat haþ *sharpe feet* is fals and mut be amendid . . . Also þis word *ex* signifieþ sumtyme *of*, and sumtyme it signifieþ *bi*, as Ierom seip."<sup>110</sup> These are some of the practices that keep translators from rendering "superfluous words."

Chaucer knows that the *Treatise* could never be pedagogically effective were not careful attention paid on his part to the grammatical differences between Latin and English. So in the Prologue, he proclaims the grammatical problem with a didactic tone much like that of the Middle English grammatical texts, inclusive of the Wycliffite General Prologue and other Wycliffite texts on translation. He avers the profundity of Latin grammar ("for Latyn canst thou yit but small") in comparison to the "full light reules" of English; he expressly opposes the "curious endityng" (45) of Latin to his "rude [vernacular] endityng" (43). He marks Latinity as "curious," much like the Wycliffites who refer not only to the "curiouse preching of Lateyn" but regard speaking in Latin (and in Greek) as speaking "gramaticalliche" and "curiously."<sup>111</sup>

But Chaucer is writing about grammar obliquely, translation ostensibly. Knowing that the Wycliffites were authorities on the subject of translation, he might want to study their theories out of a text with pedagogical aims, a text that provides examples of good and bad English prose renderings, a text that details the specifics about Latin constructions and articulates compelling literary historical reasons for translating. Like the Middle English grammatical tradition, such a text would, not surprisingly, originate in Oxford – the birthplace of Wycliffism and a locale Chaucer would often visit, once specifically to consult manuscripts relevant to the *Treatise*.<sup>112</sup> That text is, as we have seen, the Wycliffite General Prologue.



## CHAUCER'S ENGLISH LESSON

The Prologue to the *Treatise on the Astrolabe* invites us to look back with Chaucer on his work as a prose translator, leading us to believe that perhaps he, in assessing the quality of *Boece*, might have sided with Hanna's opinion – that it is a “great Chaucerian embarrassment”<sup>113</sup> – and not Lydgate's, that “Boeces book” is a “hool translacioun.”<sup>114</sup> For looking at *Boece* from the perspective of the *Treatise*, Chaucer might appreciate the greater fluidity of the latter and so choose to describe his improved procedures by the Wycliffite principles of “trewe and hool translacioun.”<sup>115</sup> The Prologue to the *Treatise on the Astrolabe* makes up for that missing preface to *Boece*.<sup>116</sup>

Chaucer is thus a “lewd compiler” (60–61) in the strictest sense, a man who “mixes words said by others with his own,” by embracing Wycliffite models of idiomatic translation to mark his own advancement as a translator.<sup>117</sup> And what did he accomplish in this mixture? Rather than choosing conventions so over-used as to be unmarked and assimilable to every version of the Hieronymian commonplace since (and before) Jerome, he gleans vernacular terms and arguments of recent coinage that represent valued practices within a community of practitioners who have distinguished themselves as innovators in English. This is, in other words, Chaucer aligning himself with his contemporaries in ways quite different from both his crypto-, but mostly passive-aggressive, gestures toward Gower or Langland. Rather, he realizes the self-promotional value in identifying with an emergent interpretive community of English translators, sharing with them, to recall Stanley Fish's familiar characterization, “strategies . . . for writing texts, for constituting their properties and assigning their intentions.”<sup>118</sup> Chaucer, then, writes with the Wycliffites and Trevisa in mind, casting himself as a translator whose imagined audience is not delimited only by Lewis or, more typically, court practices as much as by broader multiple publics inclusive of these English translators, which might be “every discret persone that redith or herith this litel tretys” (Prologue, 41–42). Commending his prose translation in Wycliffite terms, he submits it to what turns out to be an important history of reception: the *Treatise* would run in at least thirty-four copies (fragments, extracts, and all)<sup>119</sup> – on average, twice as many manuscripts than his other works, save the *Tales*.<sup>120</sup> It is one of his most public works and one of his most visible translations. And Chaucer fashions himself accordingly. And by doing so in ways that other English translators will recognize, and in ways that readers of English translations will respect, he inserts himself

into a contemporary conversation about vernacular literary theory and ranks himself as a peer among his English contemporaries. It is those peers or translators, finally, who are the “noble clerkes.” For, after all, the Wycliffites’ point was to close the historical distance between themselves and Augustine and Jerome. Chaucer did the same with the “Latyn folk” and indeed the Wycliffites. In sum, the poet’s representation of translation here bolsters his vernacular authority and, finally, revises our own understanding of his need for sources that are indelibly local or, better, close to home.



PART III

*The early fifteenth century: heretics and  
eucharists*



*Thomas Hoccleve's heretics*

An adherent of the most rigid orthodoxy may be demonic.<sup>1</sup>  
Kierkegaard

Having investigated Geoffrey Chaucer's relation to Wycliffism in the [previous chapter](#), it seems appropriate now to turn to a figure who is often credited for establishing much of the Chaucer tradition, Thomas Hoccleve.<sup>2</sup> Yet while Hoccleve extols Chaucer as his "maister" (1962, 4983) and indicates a personal acquaintance with the earlier poet (1866–67), he is careful to demonstrate quite a different relationship than Chaucer to Wycliffism.<sup>3</sup> He does not follow Chaucer into the Wycliffite territories of vernacular translation theory, nor does he elaborate upon or notice Chaucer's endlink to the *Man of Law's Tale*, in which the Parson is called a "lollard" by the Host in a seemingly fond usage to which the Shipman reacts virulently (see Chapter 4, 75–79).<sup>4</sup> And in view of Chaucer's deft handling of anticlerical materials in such tales as the *Friar's Tale* and the *Summoner's Tale* – treatments that have provoked comment from the Reformation to the present day about Chaucer's potential Wycliffite interests – Hoccleve avoids matters that would seem the least bit heterodox.<sup>5</sup> We cannot, in other words, look to Chaucer as a mediator of Wycliffite problems for Hoccleve, despite the fact that he turned to Chaucer frequently to think through other social and cultural topics largely of a secular sort. For instance, in asserting an almost familial relation to his predecessor poet, he imagines a stable lineage (of poets) at a time when many contemporaries saw the transitions from Ricardian to Lancastrian lines of kingship as anything but smooth or natural.<sup>6</sup>

There are surely a number of reasons for this difference between Hoccleve and Chaucer. First and foremost, Hoccleve's lack of Chaucerian experimentation with Wycliffism could well reflect the orthodox temper of the fifteenth century. As A. C. Spearing puts it, the "determination to take shelter within a more rigidly defined orthodoxy against what were perceived as the terrifying dangers to Church and state seems more likely

to have discouraged any further development of Chaucer's questioning attitude."<sup>7</sup> Nicholas Watson has argued a similar point in a widely influential article on the new religious conformity legislated by Archbishop Arundel's Provincial Constitutions, which all but eliminated vernacular experimentation since the time of Chaucer.<sup>8</sup> These important views about orthodox religion and practice in the Lancastrian age conform well with the widely accepted opinion about Hoccleve's political allegiances and literary ambitions. While most critics now agree that Hoccleve is no ideologue thoroughly in the service of Lancastrian rule,<sup>9</sup> but is instead fully able to diagnose the limits of contemporary secular ambition, they are markedly less certain about this poet's ideological flexibility on the subject of religion and "lollardy." Indeed, this poet begins to look exactly like such an ideologue when late medieval religious dissent becomes a factor. As James Simpson puts it, "Most spectacularly, Hoccleve advertises himself as an apologist for royal policy in its draconian persecution of heresy. Whereas John of Gaunt had in fact been rather sympathetic to Wycliffe, Lancastrian kings immediately turned on Lollards as a convenient enemy."<sup>10</sup> Even a critic like Nicholas Perkins, who suggests that we need to rethink the idea that Hoccleve's *Regiment of Princes* is "a cog in Prince Henry's formidable propaganda machine," accepts that when it comes to "lollardy," Hoccleve is on the side of the Lancastrians in seeking to "close off religious discussion and its political implications."<sup>11</sup>

Here is, however, where Hoccleve's distinction from Chaucer can help us assess him anew, appreciating how his own terms and strategies mark his critical difference from the kinds of Lancastrian orthodoxy that, to take the most extreme example, condones or celebrates the burning of heretics – a practice that began in 1401 with the passing of the statute, *De heretico comburendo*, followed by the execution of a Wycliffite priest, William Sawtre, and, nearly a decade later, with the execution of John Badby, the first layman to be executed in England as a heretic denying the miracle of transubstantiation.<sup>12</sup> As soon as we recall that Hoccleve offers a series of stanzas about John Badby in the *Regiment of Princes*, we realize that, unlike Chaucer, he is a decidedly topical poet able to speak at length about contemporary events.<sup>13</sup> What present-day topics Chaucer cites in a few lines – his references to the Rebellion of 1381 or the "lollardy" of the Parson are two cases in point – Hoccleve offers in entire poems. His "Address to Sir John Oldcastle" is a perfect example, a poem not only about Wycliffism but also about the heresy of a certain aristocrat who was actually accused of engaging in treasonous and heretical activities against king and kingdom and eventually executed. To put a finer point on the

significance of Hoccleve's difference from Chaucer, Hoccleve is driven to topicality on account of controversies related to Wycliffism, centering his work in the discourses of realpolitik.<sup>14</sup>

This chapter, however, will not equate topicality with propaganda, which is typically the way critics evaluate the former, but will instead show that Hoccleve's topical turn *is* his preferred mode of political criticism, his method for rethinking and revising the official images and topics that were taken up in a range of contemporary sources. I shall argue this point with two works in mind, "The Address to Sir John Oldcastle" and the *Regiment of Princes*. My analysis begins with the "Address," which has been the central exhibit for scholars arguing that Hoccleve is an apologist for the Lancastrian agenda to eliminate heretics from the realm; as Simpson suggests, "Hoccleve seems to have been taken on as a spokesman for official policy, exemplified by his strident *Remonstrance against Oldcastle*."<sup>15</sup> Yet what is striking about this poem is that Hoccleve offers a version of Oldcastle very different from contemporary treatments: his Oldcastle is neither the leader of a "lollard" rebellion, which Lancastrian officialdom was at pains to demonstrate, nor a "lollard" heretic worthy of execution by the state, but rather a chivalric subject who could do better to comport himself in accordance with the secular virtue of mercy. For instance, the proceedings of Oldcastle's trial emerged as a popular text in Hoccleve's day, and the poet, I will show, follows this particular account in his "Address" but only up to a point: in his imaginative revision, Hoccleve greatly expands the opportunities for mercy that were reported to have been extended to Oldcastle and even goes so far as to substitute himself for the orthodox authority of Archbishop Arundel so as to offer what Arundel would not and could not – counsel in the virtue of mercy suitable to an aristocrat. He is so keen to formulate a merciful orthodoxy in this poem, an orthodoxy acceptable to Oldcastle, that he even accepts a Wycliffite position on confession, a concession that would have seemed utterly impossible in the present-day orthodoxy embodied by Arundel. In rewriting official discourses into exemplary narratives on the virtues, and in offering those narratives as outright alternatives to such discourses, Hoccleve endeavors to imagine possibilities that were shut down in the real time of history and only notionally present in the widely publicized, received versions of the events.

The poet explores a similar cluster of issues in the *Regiment of Princes* – only here he is not counseling an accused heretic but rather a man who consolidated his power through his anti-Wycliffite initiatives – Prince



Henry, the future Henry V. The effort to render official discourse into exemplary narrative is even more striking here, because Hoccleve draws from contemporary portraits of Prince Henry – specifically those depicting the Prince at the burning of the heretic John Badby, an episode that was recounted in a number of contemporary sources and which was typically seen as a laudable Lancastrian moment: the Prince is capable of extending mercy even to a heretic who wanted none. Hoccleve's account of this event draws from these common depictions but modifies them in a telling way. The poet does not offer the image of a virtuous Prince but rather, according to the tradition of Giles of Rome within which he writes, a ruler consumed by passions who, as a consequence, cannot act on the virtue of mercy – an act that could only come in the form of an unconditional pardon offered to Badby absent the affective pageantry. Displaying a Prince in the Prologue who does not enact the virtue of mercy, Hoccleve then offers a series of exempla in the *Regiment* proper that instruct him in the appropriate forms of ethical conduct – in what is just punishment, in what constitutes a pardonable offense, and what comprises genuine unconditional mercy, such as the Prince might have shown to Badby that day in March 1410. On the evidence of the “Address to Sir John Oldcastle” and the *Regiment*, Hoccleve emerges as a close reader of official publications and as a historical revisionist, citing topical texts and concerns so to shape a more merciful orthodoxy against its severest, juridical forms.

#### TRYING MERCY: THE “ADDRESS TO SIR JOHN OLDCASTLE”

The “Address” has naturally attracted the attention of most scholars in their assessment both of Hoccleve's response to Wycliffism and his filiations with Lancastrian orthodoxy. As John Bowers remarks, “Hoccleve rigorously followed the Lancastrian line in hammering away at the Lollards in poems such as ‘To Sir John Oldcastle’.”<sup>16</sup> And so my argument begins with this poem. The most interesting fact about Hoccleve's “Address,” in my view, is that the poet conceived of it as a topical work – it is a poem basically “about” Wycliffism – but was in the end very selective about which sorts of topical discourse concerning Oldcastle he admitted into it. In assessing this poem, it helps to know that an overwhelming amount of the publicity surrounding the Oldcastle affair – chronicle, sermon, and poetic accounts in Latin and vernacular – came from a limited number of primary sources that were themselves broadcast widely. Probably the most

widely used source was the account of Oldcastle's trial in 1413 that Arundel had publicized far and wide throughout the province of Canterbury<sup>17</sup> and which was read out in the parliament that, in 1417, decided Oldcastle's fate. At least one chronicler, the author of *Gesta Henrici Quinti*, admits his reliance on this material.<sup>18</sup> Other chroniclers, such as Thomas Walsingham, excerpted the text; yet others, such as the various redactors who construct *The Brut*, paraphrase it.<sup>19</sup> As we witness Hoccleve citing and engaging this material, we can strive to appreciate the poet's commentary on an already heavily glossed event and text, one that in late medieval England accrued meaning as a social text in all senses of the term. As such, this social text presented authors opportunities for further comment on governmental policy and ecclesiastical polity. My task, then, is not to situate the "Address" within an historical context that is somehow transparently communicated in chronicles and other texts; rather, I wish to show how Hoccleve works with the same materials chroniclers use but elaborates upon them in ways that realize possibilities shut down in the real time of history. To put this another way: we are accustomed to reading Hoccleve's handling of exemplary narratives *for* officials, but now we will be looking at his negotiation of narratives *by* officials in such a way as to rework them into newer and ethically different exemplary forms.

The "Address" falls into two parts. In the first portion, Hoccleve speaks directly to Oldcastle and then in the second, in what marks a change of tone and strategy, he rails strongly against an ungainly mass of unnamed Wycliffites.<sup>20</sup> Regardless of when precisely Hoccleve wrote this poem – some critics have been daringly exact on the date of composition<sup>21</sup> – the most we can say is that he uses topical discourse in such a way as to *locate* the first part of the poem at a specific moment, sometime between October 1413, when Oldcastle escaped from the Tower prison after his September heresy trial at Archbishop Arundel's convocation, and November 1417, when Oldcastle was recaptured. In other words, the "Address" came into being at a time when the fate of Oldcastle was as uncertain as his whereabouts – a moment when the knight's friendship with Henry V granted him first a postponement of trial and then a stay of execution for forty days after his trial, so as to supply him ample time to consider recanting.<sup>22</sup> In short, Hoccleve imagines the poem to be situated at a moment when pardon and reconciliation remained a real and practical possibility: two royal pardons for Oldcastle were issued on December 1414 and December 1415.<sup>23</sup> Pardons going to treasonous rebels

had been issued before, with a general pardon dated 28 March 1414, for other participants in the “lollard” rebellion.<sup>24</sup> But as events would have it, after appearing before parliament upon his rearrest, he was immediately executed without trial on 14 December 1417.<sup>25</sup>

How, then, does Hoccleve’s topical rhetoric operate in the “Address” and within its designated historical moment – a moment in which mercy for the knight is a possibility? In answering this question, it is necessary for us to focus on the first half of the “Address.” As I noted above, the poet evidently hews closely to the official proceedings of the trial of 1413, and we know this because of the topics he discusses. For instance, he refers only to Oldcastle’s claims about penance (81–96; see 109–10, 119–28) and the sacrament of the altar (97–104). This specificity is revealing, for these two points are among the four to be found in the trial proceedings, which compile both Oldcastle’s initial vernacular confession and his final testimony, recorded in Latin, by which he was deemed a heretic.<sup>26</sup> Hoccleve selects these two doctrinal items for treatment because, as the proceedings make clear, Arundel himself had singled them out of Oldcastle’s vernacular testimony and demanded further elaboration.<sup>27</sup> Hoccleve seems, then, to be standing in for Arundel.

So how does the poet accomplish this unusual surrogation by offering the “Address,” and why? It helps to recall that Oldcastle refused Arundel’s request to explain his views further (“noluit aliter respondere [he would not answer in any other way]”), at which point the convocation is said to have offered the knight instruction in English on the orthodox faith:

Unde nos adhuc sibi compatiētes, sub spe melioris deliberationis, promissimus eidem domino Johanni, quod certas determinationes in materia antedicta, ac super quibus idem dominus Johannes debuit clarius respondere, sibi ederemus in scriptis terminis Latinis, pro leviori intellectu ejusdem in Anglicum translatis.<sup>28</sup>

[Up to this point, we feeling compassion for him, and under the hope for a better deliberation, promised lord John that we would send to him certain determinations on the matter aforementioned in written Latin terms translated for easier understanding in English, upon which the same lord John should respond clearly.]

This advice contains specific orthodox positions on the eucharist, confession, the power of the keys, and pilgrimages – with the idea that Oldcastle was to learn these items over the weekend and repeat them back, verbatim, to the convocation on Monday.<sup>29</sup> Needless to say, that did not happen. But by writing the “Address,” Hoccleve steps in and offers a more conciliatory vernacular instruction to stand in the place of the teachings offered at the convocation.

A group of stanzas illustrates this point very well, and it is worth quoting them in full to appreciate their movement:

And for thy soules helthe do eek so.  
 Thy pryde qwenche and thy presumpcioun.  
 Wher thou hast been to Crystes feith a fo,  
*Plante in thyn herte a deep contricioun*  
 And hennesfoorth be Crystes champion.  
*The welle of mercy renneth al in brede,*  
*Drynke therof syn ther is swich foyssoun;*  
 Theyn hertes botel therof fille, I rede.

Thow haast offendid God wondirly sore,  
 And nathelees, if thou the wilt amende,  
 Thogh thy gilt were a thousande tymes more,  
*Axe him mercy and He wole it thee sende.*  
 Thow art vnwys thogh thou thee wys pretende,  
 And so been alle of thyn opinioun.  
*To God and holy chirche thou thee bende.*  
*Caste out thy venym thurgh confessioun.*

*Thow seist, confessioun auriculeer*  
*Ther needith noon, but it is the contrarie;*  
 Thow lookist amis, thy sighte is nothyng cleer.  
 Holy writ therin is thyn aduersarie,  
 And clerkes alle fro thy conceit varie  
 Pat Crystes partie holden and maynteene.  
 Leue þat conceit, let þat thou miscarie.  
 Waar of the swerd of God for it is kene.

*Heere in this lyf vnto God mercy crie,*  
*And with ax or hamer of penance*  
*Smyte on the stoon, slee thyn obstinacie.*  
 Haue of thy synnes heuy remembrance.  
*Rowne in the preestes ere, and the greuance*  
*Of thy soule meekly to him confesse.*  
 And in the wal of heuene, is no doutance,  
 Thow shalt a quik stoon be for thy goodnesse.

Oldcastel, how hath the feend the blent!  
 Where is thy knyghtly herte? Art thou his thral?  
 Thow errest foule eek in the sacrament  
 Of the auter, but how in special  
 For to declare it needith nat at al;  
 It knowen is in many a regioun.  
 Now syn the feend hath youen the a fal.  
 Qwyte him, let see, ryse up and slynge him down.

(65-104, emphasis added)

Whereas the convocation's schedule of teachings represents the formulae we have come to expect of fifteenth-century juridical orthodoxy, Hoccleve here offers Oldcastle a specifically chivalric elaboration on the items selected by Arundel – the sacraments of penance and the eucharist. Note his repetitions and emphases: "The welle of mercy," "Axe him mercy," "vnto God mercy crie," "Of thy soule meekly to him confesse." The poet instructs Oldcastle on the relevant sacramental items but also stands in as an advocate who conceives of confession and the eucharist as avenues of mercy and reconciliation. In continually laying stress on mercy, he appears to amplify the possibilities of the trial itself – primarily, the orthodox postures of mercy contained therein: "nos iterum ac sæpius, flebili vultu, dictum dominum Johannem alloquebamur, eundem verbis quibus potuimus exhortando, ut ad unitatem ecclesiæ rediret; crederet, et teneret, quod ecclesia Romana credit, et tenit [again and often with sad countenance we addressed the said lord John with such words as we could, exhorting that he should return to the unity of the church, believe and hold what the Roman Church believes and holds]."<sup>30</sup> For Hoccleve, the possibilities for mercy that were present in the proceedings – however much this legal language is a fiction that conceals the inevitability of Oldcastle's condemnation ("processimus ad sententiæ diffinitiviæ . . .") – are *still* available in a poem in which Hoccleve translates the mode of the "address" in the "Address" from the convocation's "we" ("alloquebamur [we addressed]") to Hocclevean "I."<sup>31</sup>

Hoccleve's method is strikingly at odds with the theological and political orthodoxy of his day. While a contemporary would taunt, curse, and condemn Oldcastle in "Lo, He That Can Be Cristes Clerc,"<sup>32</sup> and while chroniclers would transmit the proceedings with little interference,<sup>33</sup> Hoccleve seeks from the inception of the poem to "calle" Oldcastle back to "vertue":

The laddre of heuene, I meene charitee,  
Commandith vs if our brothir be falle  
Into errour to haue of him pitee,  
And seeke weyes in our wittes alle  
How we may him ageyn to vertue calle. (1–5)

It is as if Hoccleve endeavors to offer instruction in the virtues whereas others, such as the author of *Gesta Henrici Quinti*, would simply proclaim the knight to be "virtute debilis [weak in virtue]."<sup>34</sup> Hoccleve continues to register his voice in this vein, drawing himself into the poem as the pitying poetic subject – "For verray routhe of thee myn herte coldith" (16) – until

the poem makes a generic turn to a prayer, which marks the end of what critics recognize as its first part:

Almighty God, thow lord of al and syre,  
 Withouten whom is no goodnesse wrought,  
 This knyght of thyn habundant grace enspyre.  
 Remembre how deere þat thow haast him boght.  
 He is thyn handwerk, lord, refuse him noght  
 Thogh he thee haue agilt outrageously.  
 Thow þat for mercy deidest, change his thoght.  
 Benigne lord, enable him to mercy. (265–72)

This prayer is a petition for mercy, a suitable ending for the first part of the “Address.” And here, once more, Hoccleve is a vocal advocate, for this is not a private prayer. When we recollect that the “Address” was a publicly conceived poem – that is, written in such a way as to identify the readily recognizable topics of contemporary legal, political, and theological controversy – we can quickly understand that this prayer is meant to be overheard, and that Hoccleve’s voicing of this appeal (“Benigne lord, enable him to mercy”) is meant to be truly audible. And when we bear in mind the ways in which earthly kings are already imagined in divine terms, as Hoccleve’s *Regiment* and a ballade to Henry V make clear,<sup>35</sup> Hoccleve’s prayer works as a petition for mercy to an earthly “lord” – a petition that operates at a moment when, again, a pardon from Henry V to Oldcastle was still standing, as Hoccleve seems to acknowledge in his claim that “Grace is alyue” (261).<sup>36</sup> It is as if the prayer plays on the well-known friendship between both men and, as a consequence, appeals to Henry to remember once more Oldcastle as his friend: “Remembre how deere þat thow haast him boght. / . . . Benigne lord, enable him to mercy” (268; 272). These exhortations recall the poem’s ethical inception and its use of the royal “we”: “The laddre of heuene, I meene charitee, / Commandith vs if our brothir be falle / Into errour to haue of him pitee.” What Hoccleve means to do in the “Address” Henry V is meant to do with his royal powers of mercy.

Other issues come to the fore. While Oldcastle’s trial itself was coterminous with a convocation that advertised itself as “super unione et reformatione ecclesiæ Anglicanæ, tractantibus [treating on the union and reformation of the English church]” – with the idea that the Oldcastle affair would consolidate the church’s procedures against heretics in all dioceses in the province<sup>37</sup> – Hoccleve confines his concern to Oldcastle’s own “soules helthe” (65) and bodily fate, and brackets those larger issues of “ecclesia,” and its administration. The extent of this concern can be

measured in yet another difference between Hoccleve's approach and that of the convocation. Whereas Arundel sought answers from Oldcastle, Hoccleve tellingly wants none. He is quite insistent that Oldcastle forgo replying and disputing (125), with examples to bolster the point about "wommen" who "kakele" (145, 148), ancestral families who "medled nothyng" of the faith (159), "The cristen emperour Iustinian" who promulgates a law not "to despute of the feith openly" (185, 190), and heretics who speak "sly coloured argumentes" that "Han in this knyght put so feendly ententes" (281, 283; see 350, 396). Hoccleve wants no reply in view of the already proven fact – a "fact" in the sense of consensus among contemporaries who commented upon the trial proceedings – that no answer would ever be satisfactory or productive in moving the knight out of heresy: as the proceedings of the convocation make clear, when Oldcastle finally answered, his demise was all but guaranteed. For example, his formulation regarding the sacrament of the altar seems orthodox on the surface, but not to Arundel.<sup>38</sup> Oldcastle's four final answers appeared to be equivocal because they were not verbatim expressions of the vernacular advice offered by the convocation, insuring his contumacious intransigence and securing his condemnation to death. Hoccleve, by revising this feature of the trial proceedings, imagines the case of Oldcastle to transpire on very different terms, urging Oldcastle to adopt a "Christianity for courtly subjects," to borrow a phrase David Aers aptly uses in another context.<sup>39</sup>

Indeed, we can now appreciate the full extent to which Hoccleve offers an alternative for Oldcastle that comes out of the recorded comportment of the participants in the trial account. That alternative is faithful knighthood. Whereas the trial proceedings and chronicle accounts contain instances where Oldcastle's status as a "dominus" and friendship with Henry V conferred onto him courtesies and privileges – a delay in trial, a temporary stay of execution – Hoccleve magnifies the issue of lordly identity that, when properly recognized and performed, is the way out of heresy entirely. Repeatedly, the poet counsels Oldcastle to behave like a "manly" knight, to read the books knights read (195–208) and to fight like knights fight (501).<sup>40</sup> That Oldcastle needs such counseling and "reed" (241) means that Hoccleve imagines the knight to be bereft of agency – a man who would "slippe into the snare of heresie" (26), who would be stricken by a "feend" masquerading as lady Fortune: "Now syn the feend hath youen the a fal" (103). In this respect, then, Hoccleve reverses the Lancastrian effort to assign heretical agency – that act of the will to commit heresy and treason – to the knight. A "heretic" is typically

defined in both canon and statutory law (to the extent that it is concerned with heresy) as one who willfully “chooses” to depart from the will of the church; indeed, “heretics” are said to elevate their wills above all else.<sup>41</sup> Yet in the “Address,” Oldcastle is not *that* sort of heretic. While it is true that Hoccleve imputes heresy to Oldcastle (“Thyn heresie” [63]; see 7, 105–06), the majority of references rob Oldcastle of agency and willpower and transfer these to the heretics who actively perverted and seduced him: “Yee þat peruerted *him*, yee folk dampnable, / Yee heretikes þat han him betrayed / That manly was, worthy and honorable” (273–75, my emphasis; see also 281–88). In canonical terms, Oldcastle is an unusual heretic, then: Hoccleve neither calls him a “lollard,” despite the fact that the convocation of 1413 named the knight as a major “lollard,”<sup>42</sup> nor, most astoundingly, does he accuse him of leading the “lollard” rebellion of 1414, a role about which all contemporary accounts were consistent.<sup>43</sup> Instead, in the “Address,” the heretics mentioned in the second part are the rebels rising against the king,<sup>44</sup> while the only rising Oldcastle is capable of leading is his very own out of the muck of heresy – and barely that, which is why Hoccleve exhorts repeatedly: “Ryse vp and poure thee of they trespass” (32); “ryse vp and slynge him [“the feend”] down” (104); “Ryse vp a manly knyght out of the slow / of heresie” (105–06);<sup>45</sup> “aryse out of your errour soone” (317).

Yet Hoccleve’s modification of the common definition of heresy, whereby Oldcastle lacks agency, makes sense in a poem intended in part to show Oldcastle the way to agency and aristocratic orthodoxy. And that way is, as we have already seen, chivalric virtue; the virtue Oldcastle must seek first and foremost is mercy (70, 76, 89, 108). In chivalric terms, asking for mercy is tantamount to the power of granting it. One is not weak for wanting mercy. “Beholde Theodosius” (51): if secular heroes of yore can ask for grace (56), so, too, can Oldcastle. Significantly, Hoccleve does not prescribe submission to orthodoxy for Oldcastle; that kind of Christian submission would still subject the knight to an authority that cannot fully accommodate chivalric virtue and courtly Christianity.<sup>46</sup> Instead, Hoccleve gives an inch. He helps the knight conceive of a more flexible orthodoxy that might be worth joining. In this regard, Hoccleve makes exceptions – specifically, concessions to Wycliffism – that could never be made in convocation:

Par cas, thow to thyself shame it arettist  
 Vnto prelatz of holy chirche obeie.  
 If it be so, thy conceit thow missettist;  
 What man aright can in his herte weye



The trouthe of that? To Ihesu Cryst, I seye,  
 Princypally is þat obedience.  
 God hath ordeyned preestes to purueye  
 Salue of penance for mannes offense. (113–20)

The point is that if Oldcastle feels hesitant in submitting to a priest or prelate, as he showed himself to be in the proceedings, then he ought to think of this act as a submission to Christ alone. What's interesting in this emphasis is how close it brings Hoccleve to Oldcastle's recorded Wycliffite position that priests cannot fully be mediators of divine mercy.<sup>47</sup> The poet, of course, identifies this position as misinformed – "If it be so, thy conceit thow missettist" (115) – but, again, Hoccleve's effort is, when it comes to addressing this knight, conciliatory and concessionary. He finds it worthwhile to absorb a Wycliffite position if it means that mercy can be had on the behalf of both parties – for Oldcastle, to seek mercy and recant and imagine that he is doing so "To Ihesu Cryst" (118); for Hoccleve, to extend it genuinely and alternatively. In that respect, Hoccleve's poem is as much an "address" to Lancastrian orthodoxy as it is to the heretic knight. For in offering a model of orthodoxy that is attuned to the demands of chivalric culture's own set of virtues, it instantly suggests that the models of orthodoxy hitherto exemplified by Arundel and his convocation are, indeed, less than exemplary.

THE PRINCE, THE HERETIC, AND THE PROLOGUE  
 TO *REGIMENT OF PRINCES*

If Hoccleve draws himself imaginatively close to the heretic Oldcastle by viewing him as a fallen Christian "brothir" (2) in need of counsel, the poet is arguably even closer to the heretic John Badby by virtue of historical, textual, and institutional circumstances. Badby appeared from utter obscurity to become the first layperson in England to be executed as an obdurate heretic, burned in a barrel at the stake in Smithfield in March 1410 in one of England's most notorious and widely documented spectacles. Prince Henry – the future Henry V – attended the execution and was reported in many contemporary accounts to have halted mercifully the proceedings to see whether Badby would repent and accept a pardon on top of a life's annuity. Needless to say, this offer was temporary: Badby refused, the opportunity for a pardon passed, and the execution resumed. Hoccleve refers to this episode in some detail in the Prologue to the *Regiment of Princes* (lines 281–392), and as it turns out, he was in a good position to present himself as a penetrating commentator. Indeed,

the entire Badby affair, from its participants to its textualization, was especially close to his institutional situation at the Privy Seal.<sup>48</sup> Persons at the convocation concerning Badby included secular and religious clerks and lay lords alike, as well as members of Hoccleve's circle; among them, "[Edward], duce Ebor. Thoma Beauford, Angliae cancellerio; domino de Roos, clerico rotulorum, et aliis dominis spiritualibus et temporalibus in multitudine copiosa [Edward, Duke of York, Thomas Beauford, Chancellor of England, lord de Roos, clerk of the rolls, and a great multitude of other spiritual and temporal lords]."<sup>49</sup> As Chancellor of England at the time, Thomas Beauford sat at the top of the judicial and archival organization that was the Chancery; William de Roos (d.1414), as clerk of the rolls, was the administrative head of the Chancery itself.<sup>50</sup> Hoccleve's work in the Privy Seal assured contacts with the Chancery in Westminster Hall, as petitions, warrants, letters patent, and letters close moved between these adjacent offices.<sup>51</sup> Henry Somer, also present at Badby's trial and once chancellor himself, is an acquaintance and patron of Hoccleve, a relationship that likely began through professional contacts with the Exchequer.<sup>52</sup> Most tellingly, whatever relevant writs were to be issued with regard to Badby's case would flow from the king's secretary to the Privy Seal itself to be authorized or "sealed" before going on to the Chancery for action, such as the writ dated 5 March calling for the immediate delivery of Badby from the convocation to a place suitable for burning.<sup>53</sup> And, of course, Hoccleve himself collected in his formulary a variety of writs.<sup>54</sup> We will never know if Hoccleve handled Badby's writ. But we do know that Hoccleve sat squarely in the middle of the textual organization that effected the heretic's demise once he was taken into custody by the secular officials. It would seem too easy to suggest that Hoccleve, by writing the *Regiment*, and referring to the burning of Badby in its Prologue, is reproducing in literary form the textual performances of the Privy Seal and its adjacent institutions, for there the argument would end. A more promising line of inquiry, I believe, begins with the knowledge that by personifying himself in the *Regiment*, Hoccleve introduces his own voice and will into the circuits of official discourse and expresses his difference from the sorts of Lancastrian orthodoxy embodied by the words of his interlocutor, the Old Man, and the actions of his dedicatee, Prince Henry.<sup>55</sup> It is not for clerks to insinuate themselves into official productions to such an extent, especially those concerning such high and grave matters.<sup>56</sup> But Hoccleve moves beyond the role of witness or spectator when he subsumes these events within his own productions and becomes himself a writer of history.

*Test image: a prince's portrait*

Most readers take Hoccleve's image of the Prince in the Prologue as the best instance of this poet's desire to be a Lancastrian spokesperson in a work that is "wholly consistent with the prince's own program of self-representation as a peerless exemplar of orthodoxy," as Paul Strohm has suggested.<sup>57</sup> Here is the relevant passage in all of its affective force:

"My lord the Prince – God him save and blesse –  
Was at his [Badby's] deedly castigacioun  
And of his soule hadde greet tendrenesse,  
Thristyng sore his sauvacioun.  
Greet was his pitous lamentacioun  
Whan that this renegat nat wolde blynne  
Of the stynkyng error that he was ynnne.

"This good lord highte him to be swich a mene  
To his fadir, our lige lord sovereign,  
If he renounce wolde his error clene  
And come unto our good byleeve ageyn,  
He sholde of his lyf seur been and certain;  
And souffissant lyfode eek sholde he have  
Unto the day he clad were in his grave.

"Also this noble pryncce and worthy knyght –  
God qwyte him his charitable labour –  
Or any stikke kyndlid were or light,  
The sacrament, our blessid Sauveour,  
With reverence greet and hy honour,  
He fecche leet, this wrecche to converte,  
And make our feith to synken in his herte.

"But al for naght, it wolde nat betyde;  
He heeld foorth his oppinioun dampnable,  
And caste our holy Cristen feith asyde  
As he that was to the feend acceptable.  
By any outward tokne resonable,  
If he inward hadde any repentance,  
That woot He that of nothyng hath doutance.["] (295–322)

The portrait does indeed seem laudatory, but before keeping that conclusion we must bear in mind, first and foremost, that this depiction of the Prince is spoken by the Old Man, a fact that betrays the "angle" or interpretive frame of the portrait itself. In the same way that the Old Man's subsequent statement – "But wolde God tho Crystes foos echoon / That holde as he heeld were yserved so" (327–28) – points to the ideological

wish that more Badbys be sought out and burned in accordance with the statute that intended to make a lesson out of this execution,<sup>58</sup> so, too, is the Old Man's praise of Prince Henry equally ideological, a reminder that the Prince endorsed the very statute legalizing the burning of heretics (*De heretico comburendo*) and was himself the "driving force" behind the first execution occasioned by this enactment – that of William Sawtre in 1401.<sup>59</sup>

Among all the versions of the Prince that could be imagined in the *Regiment* – and in the fifteenth century there were plenty to choose from, as both K. B. McFarlane and Lee Patterson have made clear<sup>60</sup> – Hoccleve depicts that of the anti-Wycliffite Lancastrian present at the Smithfield spectacle of 1410. This is not only the first, potentially keynote, identification of the Prince (185) in a series of identifications throughout the poem,<sup>61</sup> but it is also, more importantly, the *first* example of princely action in the *Regiment* entire, which itself is about princely action and inaction. As I will now argue, however, Hoccleve does not wait until the exempla of the *Regiment* proper to apply the critical tendencies of the *Fürstenspiegel* tradition to the topics of contemporary history, nor does he wait for those exempla to instruct the Prince, but rather uses his Prologue as an exemplum in its own right concerning contemporary forms of princely virtue and heroism that were circulating within Lancastrian England, especially on the topic of the Prince's conduct at Smithfield. Hoccleve's response to these treatments and images is to refer to them but modify them in such a way as to imagine a Prince who is constitutionally in need of the instruction the *Regiment* has to offer *because* of his actions at the burning of Badby, a Prince who must heed the lessons of the exempla contained in such sections of the poem as "De Pietate" and "De Misericordia" (both to be discussed below).

Let's first look closely at this image of the Prince, then, and note how Hoccleve's version is different from contemporary examples, such as that represented by Thomas Walsingham, and seconded by a number of other witnesses. Walsingham offers this portrait:

Clamore cuius horribili Dominus Princeps motus, jussit ignis materiam ab eo subtrahi, ardorem longius amoveri. Consolatur pene mortuum, promittens nunc etiam victurum se et consecuturum veniam, ac singulis diebus vitæ suæ, si resipisceret, de fisco regio tres denarios percepturum; sed miser, refocillato spiritu, respuit tantæ dignationis oblationem, non dubium quin maligno spiritu induratus. Quamobrem jussit Dominus Princeps eum iterum recludi dolio, gratiam nullam consecuturum de reliquo; unde contigit quod illic ad favillas arsit ardelio, miserabiliter mortuus in peccato suo.<sup>62</sup>

[The lord prince was moved by his horrible cries, and ordered the materials of the fire to be set aside and the victim to be removed. He comforted the near-dead man, promising him even now life and pardon, and for every single day of his life, if he would repent, receive a grant of three pence a day; but the miserable man, revived in spirit, refused the offer of so much honor, undoubtedly made obdurate by an evil spirit. Wherefore the lord prince ordered him to be enclosed again in the barrel, with no possibility of pardon thenceforth; and so it followed that there the unwise man (busybody) was burnt to embers (ashes), dying miserably in his sin.]

This account is consistent with others, such as that in the *Eulogium* continuation, John Capgrave's compilation of chronicles, *Gesta Henrici Quinti*, *Gregory's Chronicle*, and the *Chronicle of London*. Yet Hoccleve's is curiously different and not as straightforward as it seems. To begin with, Hoccleve's Prince is excessively "piteous," "thirsting" to facilitate the salvation of Badby and his soul, and lamenting in the process: "And of his soule hadde greet tendrenesse, / Thristynge sore his sauvacioun / Greet was his pitous lamentacioun" (297–99). Hoccleve's Prince does not need to hear the shrieks of the burning Badby to be moved to such pity, unlike the Prince in the accounts of Walsingham and the *Eulogium continuator*. Instead, he is shown to intercede even *before* the first faggot is kindled ("Or ['before'] any stikke kyndlid were or light" [311]). Hoccleve has offered us a Prince more "pitious" than any of his doubles in contemporary accounts.

Clearly it is tempting to see this illustration as yet another instance of Hoccleve's gratifying a royal superior until we realize that a question is begged – that of virtue. Yet no sooner do we consider the question of virtue than we acknowledge the important generic differences between this poet's text and the contemporary accounts retailing the Badby affair: Hoccleve is writing in the *Fürstenspiegel* tradition whose ostensible subject is virtue in all its varieties. It is therefore notable that Hoccleve is silent about whether the Prince's pity is a *virtue* at all, a silence that is telling in view of a tradition of thinking not pursued by Chaucer but represented by both Aquinas and his student, Egidius (aka Giles of Rome), whose *De Regimine Principum* was one of the main sources for Hoccleve's own *Regiment* (see 2052–53).<sup>63</sup> This tradition holds that pity is a passion and an appetite, not a virtue: "Mercy signifies grief for another's distress. Now this grief may denote, in one way, a movement of the sensitive appetite, in which case mercy is not a virtue but a passion."<sup>64</sup> Hoccleve, I argue, emphasizes the significance of this tradition in his choice of words concerning Prince Henry's "Thristynge sore," which expresses an immoderate, appetitive "sorrow," and not an act of mercy or a movement of virtues.<sup>65</sup> According to Egidius's *De Regimine Principum*, it is not

advisable for princes to display overmuch pity; such a display requires virtue as its remedy:

alle . . . sorwe schulde be moderate and forsake. Panne for to moderat suche sorwe, remedies schal be zeue by þe whiche suche sorwe may be voided. And it semeth þat þe philosofer toucheth þree remediis by þe whiche sorwe may be voided. Þe þre remedies ben vertues, frends, and consideracioun of þe soþe and of þe truethe.<sup>66</sup>

Although it should be acknowledged that, as Andrew Galloway has argued, to be the object of the king's pity is to be placed in a liminal and terrifying position, it is at the same time overtly critical to depict the Prince as excessively compassionate and immoderately sorrowful.<sup>67</sup> By removing virtue from this scene, and any attending discussion of "mercy," Hoccleve is able to depict a prince who is, according to the Egidean tradition in which he writes, in need of instruction in the virtues and, needless to say, the lessons of the *Regiment* proper.

It is worth repeating at this stage that Hoccleve has chosen to use the Badby affair as a pretext for pointing to a lack in the Prince. We should, then, linger a bit more on Hoccleve's Prince and this question of mercy, that absent virtue, and its link to virtuous action. Indeed it is not the Prince's place to act directly and pardon Badby. He is an intermediary to the king. As the Old Man says: "This good lord highte him to be swich a mene / To his fadir, our lige lord sovereyn, / If he renounce wolde his error clene" (302–04). Unlike other major accounts, which simply name the Prince as "Regis primogenitus" or "the kynges eldest sone," Hoccleve's Prince Henry volunteers himself to be Badby's advocate in pleading mercy to the king, assuring "his lyfe sure been and certain" (306) and hoping to secure for Badby a "souffissant lyfode" (307) for his entire life.<sup>68</sup> The specific topic here, and the one to which we shall turn shortly, is that of royal pardon, and these are sometimes pursued by extremely important persons – Prince Henry obviously qualifying – on the behalf of lesser persons.<sup>69</sup> As a consequence of this adjustment, Hoccleve accommodates a technicality in how pardons are sued by intercessors by shifting the burden of a plea for mercy from Badby – however grimly reactive it was said to be – to the Prince.<sup>70</sup> As the poet would do a few years later in his "Address to Sir John Oldcastle," imagining a heretic without agency and in need of an advocate, here he depicts the Prince as an agent of mercy for another man – not just *any* royal subject, but a heretic.

One revision leads to another. Hoccleve omits any reference to ecclesiastical persons or authorities who damned Badby. As we have it, only the Prince was at Badby's "deedly castigacioun" (296). The poet goes

even further in assigning the actions of officials of the church, as depicted in the chronicles, to the Prince: where, for instance, the *Chronicle of London* states that “the prior of seynt Bertelmewes in Smythfeld broughthe the holy sacrament of Godys body, with xij torches lyght before, and in this wyse came to this cursed heretyk,” Hoccleve transfers the responsibility of this move to the Prince alone: “The sacrament, our blessid Sauveour, / With reverence greet and hy honour, / He fecche leet, this wrecche to converte” (312–14).<sup>71</sup> With all ecclesiastical dignitaries thus absent, Hoccleve both brackets all opportunities of mercy available from such persons<sup>72</sup> and occasions for blame, should they be found at fault (as in the example of John Foxe, below). Again, the poet focuses on the only man acting, the only man who can act – the Prince.

In Hoccleve’s work, then, the episode morphs into a telling scenario where absolutely everything is in the Prince’s hands: while a king or prince cannot charge a man with heresy – that power belongs to the church – the secular arm whose duty is to execute relapsed and contumacious heretics has the option of pardoning them unconditionally.<sup>73</sup> Hoccleve raises these questions in the Prologue in order to address them in the *Regiment* proper, where he reflects on the nigh limitless powers of pity, mercy, and royal pardon from *punishment* in capital cases – with the strong retrospective suggestion that the case of Badby could have been handled differently.<sup>74</sup>

#### THE REGIMENT OF PRINCES

##### *Badby in the burning bull*

We can now make a larger claim about the *Regiment* and the ways in which the portrait of Prince Henry, which is a “test image” of princely virtues and the lack thereof, shapes Hoccleve’s presentation of subsequent virtues and exempla. “De justitia,” as we noted earlier, opens the *Regiment* proper and advances the problem of virtue and of the brotherly counsel in the virtues for those in error – “For whan a man yfalle into errour is, / His brothir owith him conseil and rede / To correcte and amende his wikkid dede” (2488–90) – lines that Hoccleve would enfold into his own ethical and moral mandate in the “Address” (1–5). The second section of the *Regiment*, “De Pietate,” begins, suggestively enough, with a tale of a man in a horrible contraption for execution – a burning bull – and ends with a consideration of the powers and possibilities of pardon. The third section, “De misericordia,” completes what I believe is a triadic, logical unit in the

*Regiment*, which is visibly informed by that initial episode in the Prologue concerning Prince Henry and the heretic Badby: here, in this third part, Hoccleve explores how the passions ought not to serve only displays of feeling but rather be put into action in the service of virtue – namely, in the work of divinely inspired, unconditional mercy.

Let's now turn to that second section, "De Pietate," and its topically pertinent exemplum, keyed in to the contemporary images of the Prince and Badby, as well as to Hoccleve's own image of the "pitious" man who was soon to be Henry V. The opening exemplum of "De Pietate" tells the story of a court subject who flatters his king by building a cruel instrument of torture – a brass bull in which a victim is enclosed and burned – yet the king, feeling upstaged in the art and practice of cruelty, decides that the device should be tested by none other than its own creator.<sup>75</sup> Prima facie, the parallel between this exemplum and the Badby episode in the Prologue might be hard to see, but the link has been convincingly established by Simpson, who suggests that each supplements the other within a more comprehensive, Lancastrian, anti-Wycliffite agenda: the "example of Badby is proffered as an instance of Henry's mercy, but Hoccleve is in fact making a brazen bull of his own poem, with which to bestialize and magnify the torment of the Lollard, in the service of Lancastrian orthodoxy."<sup>76</sup> As the Prologue and this exemplum are the only two episodes in the *Regiment* featuring a death by burning, it is logical to associate one with the other.

Yet before reaching conclusions about the serviceability of this exemplum to "Lancastrian orthodoxy," we can recognize that it comes to Hoccleve as a story about tyrants and, as such, cannot fully offer the images – "a tirant despitous" (3004) – that are ideologically suited to the tasks of Lancastrian propaganda, of the soon-to-be Henry V's sense of public self.<sup>77</sup> Indeed, in the Ovidian tradition, this exemplum functions as anathema,<sup>78</sup> as John Foxe well knew; in his *Acts and Monuments* he explicitly linked this exemplum to the burning of Badby and blamed the then English church for the atrocity: "John Badby, still persevering in his constancy unto the death, was brought into Smithfield, and there, being put in an empty barrel, was bound with iron chains fastened to a stake, having dry wood put about him. And . . . he was thus standing in the pipe or tun, for as yet Perillus's Bull was not in use among the bishops."<sup>79</sup> While it is true that poets are wont to proffer stories about tyrants to rulers, we have a mismatch here that seems to contradict Simpson's insight about bestializing the suffering victim: stories about tyrants are typically about their fall or reformation, and what we have here is at base a



story about a cruel “kyng” who acts on his cruelty and gets away with it.<sup>80</sup> Is that a fitting or instructive image for Prince Henry? Are there any lessons for the “kyng” or Prince apart from condoning the willful execution of a subject by fire? In Hoccleve’s source for the exemplum, Jacob’s *Ludo Scachorum*, the suitability of this exemplum for the lesson it purports to teach is not questioned: “[d]ebet etiam impietatem detestari [a king also ought to detest cruelty].”<sup>81</sup> That is, detesting cruelty by executing cruel persons in a most cruel fashion hardly qualifies by any standard as just advice for princes.

Hoccleve, however, sees these problems and addresses them. No sooner does he place this exemplum in his *Regiment* than it resonates with the images and problems that he identifies in the Prologue concerning the actions of “pitious” Prince Henry who oversaw the burning of Badby. As we will see, while the poet follows Jacob’s *Ludo Scachorum* in his passages on the travails of those who flatter cruel tyrants, he offers further moralization not in his source that targets Prince Henry in such a way as to imbue the exemplum with yet more contemporary pertinence and, I would argue, topicality: princes ought to exhibit pity by acting against cruelty through their powers of royal pardon – a demand that Hoccleve raises in the Prologue in the figure of a Prince who feels but does not act or enact mercy.

As the beginning of “De Pietate” makes clear, mercy is not only a matter of gentle heart and self-fashioning, but also of action, of acting mercifully in such a way as to produce charitable *consequences*, “To helpe him that men seen in mescheef smerte”:

Pitee nat elles is to undirstonde  
 But good wil inward of debonaire herte  
 And outward speeche, *and werk of man to fonde*  
 To helpe him that men seen in mescheef smerte.  
 (2997–3000, emphasis mine)<sup>82</sup>

Hoccleve is thus already setting up the terms by which the following exemplum will be read differently from Jacob, not only as a comment on flattering subjects but also on cruel kings and princes. Indeed, in the exemplum itself, the burning bull was designed to “move” the prince from pity to cruelty in what appears to be the overlain image of what horrid sights “moved” the Prince himself at Smithfield (“Clamore cuius horribili Dominus Princeps motus,” as above):

And yit, moreover, the kyng for to meeve  
 The lesse unto pitee, it maad was so  
 By sotil aart the dampned folk to greeve,

That whan to crye hem conpellid hir wo,  
 Hir vois was lyk a boles everemo . . . (3018–22)

Here, after Hoccleve has offered in the Prologue an initial portrait of a Prince whose “pitious” behavior towards Badby has no connection to the virtue of mercy, we are given a king who is moved to pity’s opposite, cruelty. And the results of both episodes are the same – a subject is executed by fire. There is a fine line between a passionate Prince Henry who lacks mercy and a prince who enacts cruelty.

Indeed, what’s most striking about Hoccleve’s version of this exemplum and what is different from, say, John Gower’s, is its uncanny consistency with contemporary accounts of the burning of Badby – he who “stood in dethes cas.”<sup>83</sup> To begin with, the instrument of execution, a bull in which the victim is placed and burned, finds an analogue in the barrel or *dolium* in which Badby was said to be enclosed and set afire. Walsingham records, “Quapropter dolio includitur, affligitur a devorante flamma, mugitque miserabiliter inter incendia [Wherefore he was enclosed in the barrel and hit by devouring flame and groaned miserably in the fire].”<sup>84</sup> Moreover, the eerie vocality recorded by Walsingham here is also echoed by Hoccleve’s exemplum: “That whan to crye hem conpellid hir wo, / Hir vois was lyk a boles everemo, / And nothyng lyk a mannes vois in soun” (3021–23).<sup>85</sup> What is further striking in this more immediate comparison is that the occupation of the victim, “a sotil werkman in craft of metal,” matches the craft and occupation of Badby, a “quidam laicus, arte faber [certain layman, a smith]” or as John Capgrave puts it, “In þis zere was a parlement at London in tyme of Lenton, where a smyth was appechid for heresie.”<sup>86</sup> Here, Hoccleve narrows his source ever so slightly, which describes Perillus as “aeris et metallorum opifex [a workman of bronze and metals].”<sup>87</sup> The exemplum Hoccleve chooses to begin his section, “De Pietate,” is thus ready-made to serve as a comment on the burning of Badby and the actions of the “pitious” Prince. To claim that Hoccleve shares the ideological interests of John Foxe is absurd; but it is quite plausible to say that if Foxe could find Badby in Perillus’s bull, then so, too, could our perceptive poet.

So what is the lesson? In his immediate conclusions about the exemplum, Hoccleve speaks of the scandals and problems of royal subjects who flatter lords (3039–101) – an interesting piece of advice that would not exclude poets such as himself; more and more does he appear to be exempt from that criticism. Subjects should not gratify lords who are cruel nor, according to some wisdom not in Jacob, should they be silent

about kingly missteps: “A gloser also keepith his silence / Often where he his lord seeth him mistake” (3088–89).<sup>88</sup> This view is consistent with the *Regiment’s* advice to the Prince on the importance of counsel (2488–90), the limits of the royal prerogative to execute subjects (2510–13, 2563–83), and the need to inflict punishment without delight (2717–23). It is important to bear in mind, however, that Hoccleve ends his reflections on the exemplum of the burning bull on a different note by turning away from Jacob’s moralizations and instead extrapolating on the relationship between any given “prince” and the cruel king:

A prince moot been of condicioun  
 Pitous, and his angry refreyne and ire,  
 Lest an unavysid commocioun  
 Him chaufe so and sette his herte on fyre,  
 That him to venge as blyve he desyre,  
 And fulfille it in dede. Him owith knowe  
 His errour, and qwenche that fyry lowe. (3102–08)

Here is a statement of what a “prince moot been,” according to teachings attributed to Aristotle:<sup>89</sup> when a prince acts unmercifully, his “condicioun” is likened to, appropriately enough, a fire – “Him chaufe so and sette his herte on fyre.” The counsel Hoccleve endorses is that cruel princes ought to know their errors and quench their rage, their internal fires – “Him owith knowe / His errour, and qwenche that fyry lowe” – for in so doing they will extinguish the palpable fires of cruelty by which persons are wantonly executed.<sup>90</sup> Good princes ought not to act passionately in a fit of “unavysid commocioun.” They ought not “desyre” vengeance and act upon it “in dede.” Mercy, princes must see, puts out the fire – literally – and offers a moral and ethical course of action different from answering cruelty with cruelty. All said, then, this stanza is not simply for any given prince; it is a glaring message for Prince Henry.

### *Prince of pardons*

For the remainder of “De Pietate,” Hoccleve selects exempla that both elaborate upon the problems of the first exemplum of the burning bull and respond to the nexus of issues presented in the contemporary representations of Prince Henry’s intervention in the Badby affair, the power of pardon, and the justice of state executions. It is, of course, fitting that “De Pietate” includes a discussion about the power and problems of pardon, for Hoccleve is opening up a possibility that was shut down at the burning of Badby where, as Walsingham states (above), there was “no

possibility of pardon thenceforth." Hoccleve approaches pardons by homing in on those that are illegitimate – pardons that release murderers from punishment:<sup>91</sup>

Whan he a man ymurdred hath and slawe,  
 A man to slee by lawe it is lisible –  
 That slaghtre beforn God is admittible;  
 And if a kyng do swiche murdrers grace  
 Of lyf, he boldith hem eft to trespase. (3118–22; see 3123–99)

Hoccleve acknowledges that pardons going to murderers are illegitimate in order to bring to view a broader idea – that pardons for a number of other lesser crimes are valid, as in the following lines, which juxtapose illegitimate pardons that tolerate or "suffre" the "murdreman" with pardons that prevent "Meschevous deeth to many a creature":

My tale is doon. Now soothly, it is neede  
 Tho grauntes to withstonde that procure  
 Meschevous deeth to many a creature.  
 Pitee avallith mochil, but nat there,  
 For bet it is to slee the murdreman  
 Than suffre him regne, for he hath no fere  
 His hand to use foorth as he bygan; (3162–68)

The lines, "Tho grauntes to withstonde that procure / Meschevous deeth to many a creature," can speak volumes in the total context of "De Pietate," and not only look forward to other sorts of permissible pardon discussed in this section – such as pardoning those who have been defeated in war (3228–48) or excusing from the battlefield knights too weak or old to fight (3249–69) – but also look back to Perillus, whose prince was too cruel even to enact pity or imagine mercy. The final comment, however, goes even farther back in the *Regiment* to the Prologue and to Prince Henry, who appears there as an exceedingly "pitious" man in front of the doomed Badby. It recalls a concentrated focus on pity and mercy in the Prologue, where the poet's persona laments, "Allas! I see routhe and pitee exylid / Out of this land. Allas, compassioun!" (862–63, 755, 778–784), and where the problems of cruelty are delineated not only in terms that knights, such as the Prince, can understand (862–910), but in ways that recall the other exempla of "De Pietate" concerning how pity might work within chivalric contexts (869–81, 890–903). As such, "De Pietate" supplies not only another angle from which to examine Prince Henry's conduct at the burning of Badby but also submits to consideration the possibilities for pardon that were not realized in the real time of history. Why did not

Prince Henry enact mercy? Why did he not pardon Badby unconditionally and extinguish the fires of cruelty?

It is a question that only makes sense in view of the movement of the *Regiment* itself from “De Pietate” to “De misericordia,” a movement that opens out possibilities for the princely recipient of the poem. In “De misericordia,” which is rife with direct addresses to the Prince, we find a clear demonstration that passions such as pity should lead to virtues such as mercy. Indeed, the last stanza of “De Pietate” promises this inquiry in speaking directly to the Prince:

Out of pitee growith mercy and spryngith,  
 For piteeles man can do no mercy;  
 What prince hem lakkith, nat aright he kyngith.  
 And for that they been neigheburghs so ny,  
 To pitee mercy joyne now wole I.  
 Excellent Prince, have in hem good savour,  
 And elles al in waast is your labour. (3305–11)

Pity is the precondition for mercy, but mercy has its own modes of comportment, its unique obligations. Pity and mercy are incomplete without each other – “To pitee mercy joyne now wole I” – and Hoccleve is careful to posit that Prince Henry’s labors will be in vain and ineffectual – indeed, a prince would be unfit to be king (3307) – if both pity and mercy were undervalued or uncoupled. Obviously, the poet is ready to take up the missing virtue in the portrait of Prince Henry in the Prologue – mercy – and he is insistent that mercy has specific requirements above and beyond sobriety, chastity, truthfulness, and other qualities:

Thogh that a man be sobre, chaast, and treewe,  
 And be with many an hy vertu endowed,  
 And geve, and nat forgeve, it shal him reewe.  
 Whereas oure werkes muste been avowed,  
 The unmerciable shal be disallowed.  
 Who nat forgeveth, mercy dooth he noon,  
 And mercilees man mercy shal forgoon. (3326–32)

We have again come upon the problem of a prince – not just any prince – who can feel but not act: to give or be generous is not the same as forgiving or giving mercy; mercy must be put into action (“oure werkes muste been avowed” [3329]). Likewise, to eschew forgiveness is to reject merciful work and to be barred from divine grace.

Hoccleve proceeds from this point to lay out his most theological and soteriological stanzas, moving from the incarnation of Christ as the embodiment of mercy (3333–34) to an exhortation to the Prince

himself – “O worthy Prince, for to God eterne / It ful plesant is; dooth your mercy heere, / For to late is aftir yee go to beere” (3344–46) – and then finally frames the question of mercy in terms of succession:

Take heede, excellent Prince, of your grauntsyre,  
How in his werkes he was merciable.  
He that for mercy dyde qwyte his hyre.  
He nevere was in al his lyf vengeable,  
But ay forgaf the gilty and coupable.  
Our lige lord your fadir dooth the same;  
Now folwe hem two, my Lord, in Goddes name! (3347–53)

However true or untrue this statement might be about the Prince's predecessors, it makes a strong claim about how mercy is shown to be a possibility for action (“Take heede”).<sup>92</sup> Such merciful action should bracket overly affective responses, such those portrayed in the Prologue, and the tendency to be vengeful, no matter how abhorrent the offense, as in the examples of the Prince's grandfather and father:

They often hadde greet cause hem to venge,  
But hir spirites benigne and peisible  
Thoghten that craft unlusty and alenge  
And forbaar it; they kneew it unlisible.  
To mercy were hir hertes ay flexible;  
Forwhy with mercy God shal qwyte hem wel,  
Aftir the wordes write in the Gospel. (3347–53)

This exhortation for the Prince to conceive of mercy flexibly (“ay flexible” [3351]) goes a long way, reverberating especially with that initial exemplum of “De Pietate,” and with the penultimate exemplum in “De misericordia” of a lord who refuses to be cruel or vengeful when his subjects, inebriated with wine, slander his “estat” (3391):

Vengeance in this good lord hadde no stide;  
Mercy and humble disposicioun  
Dispensid with tho men and grace hem dide,  
And thriste undir foot crueltee adoun.  
O mighty Prince, this condicioun  
To your hynesse is ful accordant,  
And unto God almighty right plesant. (3402–08)

The power of this exemplum lies in its manner of approaching the topic of mercy from yet another angle: even if a prince is slandered by his subjects, even if his “estat” and condition are criticized, there is no justification for answering with cruelty or vengeance. We are appropriately reminded of the

“cruel” king in the initial exemplum in “De Pietate.” For Hoccleve’s advice, “And thriste undir foot crueltee adoun” (3405), is specifically addressed to the royal person and not his subjects, thereby clarifying one of the odd puzzles of the earlier exemplum of the burning bull, of which the lesson seemed to be, paradoxically, that to thwart cruelty, one must execute cruel subjects and let the cruel king go scot free: “they han cruel deeth / Often, whos crueltee cruelly sleeth” (3002–03). Rather, another lesson emerges: a prince ought to forgo brokering in vengeance altogether, because cruelty is always the dividend.

Again, and at the risk of repetition, all of this advice emerges in the context of the poet’s initial portrait of Prince Henry and its iterations across the *Regiment* proper, pointing, as the poem proceeds, backwards time and again to the problems of pity and mercy Hoccleve lays out in the Prologue, where we see a Prince in need of counsel, and a subject – John Badby – desperately in need of mercy. What Hoccleve most tellingly shows is that mercy cannot be had from anyone but the Prince, and certainly not from ecclesiastical dignitaries, who can only offer menacing gestures in place of mercy:

Power withouten mercy a kyng torneth  
 Into a tirant – waar that feendly chek;  
 For in what man that crueltee sojourneth,  
 Unto his soule it is an odious spek.  
 Tho men of God han neithir look ne bek  
 But if that it be bekkes of manace [“threatening gestures”];  
 Whereas is mercy, folwith moche grace. (3410–16)

As we saw earlier, Hoccleve, in revising the usual accounts of the Badby episode, excludes such “men of God” (3014) from his version of events, and as we read this stanza, we begin to know why. For Hoccleve, such persons simply have no practical ability to offer mercy or petition for a pardon from the king. The Prince, however, is able to do so in more ways than are immediately apparent, and it is this possibility of princely intercession, which was first imagined in the Prologue, that interests Hoccleve for ethical as well as professional reasons.

Because Hoccleve translates the terms of the institutional culture experienced at the Privy Seal into the critical resources of the *Fürstenspiegel* tradition, we can step back and reflect on that institution once more and the sorts of pardons it handles. Indeed, the question of what constitutes a pardonable offense, and what does not, is one that Hoccleve’s office would negotiate frequently in the receiving of petitions for pardon (which would produce in turn a warrant) and in the sealing of royal pardons.<sup>93</sup>

His familiarity with the form, moreover, cannot be more firmly instanced than in his own formulary, of which almost an entire section is devoted to such pardons.<sup>94</sup> Hoccleve, therefore, knows well in practical terms how a royal pardon can be “ay flexible” and full of possibilities; as a legal act and document, a royal pardon can excuse extraordinary offenses such as “treasons, rebellions, insurrections, trespasses, forfeitures, misprisions and felonies.”<sup>95</sup> Take the case of William Sawtre, Badby’s immediate predecessor in the royal spectacle of heretic burning. A priest who held a mix of unorthodox views including those against transubstantiation, he was degraded and handed over to the secular authorities to be executed as a heretic at Smithfield in 1401. Such a description makes us easily forget that once before he recanted his heresies satisfactorily enough to be returned to a parish for pastoral duties. He was also (and perhaps rather puzzlingly) pardoned by Henry IV early in his rule: “Pardon to William Sautre, chaplain, for divers treasons and felonies with which he was lately charged.”<sup>96</sup> Or take the later case of Henry Dene, a fuller of London, who was indicted for participation in the Oldcastle Rebellion of 1414, and condemned to death by hanging. Here is the summary:

Pardon to Henry Dene, ‘fullere’ of London, ‘fuller,’ and restoration of him to the king’s peace and law. Before William Roos of Hamelak and his fellows, justices of oyer and terminer in the city and suburbs of London and the county of Middlesex, he was indicted of this that he and others vulgarly called Lollards long held divers heretical opinions against the Catholic faith . . . and, being unable to maintain these so long as the royal power and estate and office of the prelatial dignity persevered within the realm in prosperity and tranquillity, schemed to annul the royal estate and the office of prelates and the orders of religious, to kill the king and his brothers and prelates and other magnates, provoke religious men to mundane occupations, spoil cathedral and other churches and religious houses of relics and other ecclesiastical goods and level them to the ground, and to appoint John Oldcastell regent of the realm . . . and on Thursday following he was found guilty by verdict of the jurors and judgement was given that he should be taken to the Tower of London and thence drawn through the middle of the city to the parish of St. Giles by the said field to new gallows there and be hanged.<sup>97</sup>

This man was pardoned, too. Even for such so-called heretics – heresy being a subspecies of treason in the matters of state – royal mercy can be exhibited. It is, of course, not the royal prerogative to excuse a subject from the charges of heresy established by the ecclesiastical authorities, but it does lie within its powers to pardon a man from any sentence of execution to be carried out by its own agents, and that is the problem posed by Hoccleve in his Prologue in the scene of the Prince and the heretic and in the subsequent exempla in the *Regiment* proper. The historical



possibilities of mercy and pardon in Hoccleve's *Regiment* are quite real and are conceived within a very particular institutional setting, the Privy Seal, from which Hoccleve likely viewed these events as problematic.

#### TOPICALLY HOCCLEVE

Methodologically speaking, I have been exploring how Hoccleve's poetic and scribal labors rely upon official texts with the sort of closeness that suggests not an inattentive transmission but instead a careful negotiation of ideological and political issues related to the persecution of heretics in late medieval England. While no critic can deny that the chroniclers follow the sympathies of such official texts, elaborating upon their ostensible premises and moving with their ideological momentum, Hoccleve does not handle such texts as a chronicler, nor does he limit himself to notarial observations befitting a denizen of the Privy Seal. Rather, he performs a different sort of work from the chroniclers by embellishing upon the more moderate possibilities of official texts, such as the possibilities of virtue, mercy, and pardon, and enfolding these into the ethical and moral demands presented to him by literary history, especially the *Fürstenspiegel* tradition, which requires that present problems – what we typically think of as “contemporary history” – be mediated by their analogues from the past – by exempla. Hoccleve's engagement and citation of official texts should be taken by us as a cue to meet his readings of official texts half way and, in turn, to interpret his poems against the official sources he revises and renders into critically exemplary forms. This poet's very notion of “the topical,” then, is not restricted to “events” but rather gets right at the nexus of event, texts, and the “making” of history. And it so happens – and this may indeed be among the more important points – that Hoccleve's topical interests are almost exclusively devoted to the matters of heresy. That he would write his poems using the phrases and knowledges of such texts means, to me at least, that the poet is expressing a political and ethical need to reimagine the place of heresy in the present, as well as to rethink the past so as to envision, instructively, a different sort of future when it comes to answering heretics with compassion and not force.

*John Lydgate's eucharists*

I am using what is almost street language to reveal the  
mysteries of the scriptures. Jerome<sup>1</sup>

A book on heresy in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries would be incomplete without a consideration of two items: the eucharist – the focal point of so much religious controversy in the late medieval period – and John Lydgate, the most prolific poet of the era. And what a powerhouse of religious verse he was, able to write poems, prayers, legends, invocations, and ballads at the drop of a hat for a variety of audiences and devout occasions. If any poet were the paragon of both orthodoxy and its speciality, anti-Wycliffism, it would be this one.

One would think. Before we go any further in assessing Lydgate's ideas about the eucharist in the context of the religious controversies centered around Wycliffism, we can be clear that Lydgate is plainly no anti-Wycliffite, never indulges in the kind of polemic that characterizes the efforts of his religious contemporaries, Roger Dymmok or Thomas Netter, both of whom produce works in the service of church and state.<sup>2</sup> And where Lydgate does take firm anti-Wycliffite positions, it is in the name of others who have already shown themselves to be champions of orthodoxy – namely, Henry V and Henry VI. In “Defence of Holy Church,” for instance, the poet celebrates Prince Henry's orthodoxy as an especially manly form of anti-heresy warfare to protect the church, which is gendered feminine (as the tradition called for) but depicted as something of a romance heroine:<sup>3</sup> “When she allas! disconsolat, allone, / Ne kneugh to whame for to make hir moone” (13–14; see 26–28). On her behalf is the Prince goaded to apply his martial abilities to her enemies:

For who is blynde or haltith in þe faith  
For any doctryne of these Sectys newe,  
And Cristes techyng therfor aside laith,  
Unto thy corone may he nat be trewe;  
He may dissymule with a feynyd hewe,

But take good heede, what way þat he faire,  
 Thy swerde of knyghthoode, that no swich ne spaire. (92–98)

Heretics are not true to the crown, and the manly response to this disobedience is to wield “Thy swerde” against them.

Lydgate also has very little to say about “lollards.” Granted, he does speak of them in less than flattering ways, but these invectives are always issued in the same breath as he is praising a Lancastrian king or prince, in such works as the *Fall of Princes* (400–13, 5959–5971); “The Soteltes at the Coronation Banquet of Henry VI” (9–16), and the “Ballade to King Henry VI upon His Coronation” (73–88).<sup>4</sup> The following from the latter poem is typical of Lydgate in this regard:

In alle þy werkis hauntyng rightwysnesse,  
 As þemperour þat called was Traian;  
 With Thiberye fredame and gentylesse,  
 Attemperaunce with prudent Gracyan,  
 And in þy doomys lyche Iustynyan,  
 Noo thing conclude til þou see þe fyn,  
 Pees preferring as Octovyan,  
 Þe Chirche cherisshing lyke to Constantyne.  
 And þat þou mayst beo resemblable founde  
 Heretykes and Lollardes for to oppresse,  
 Lych þemperour, worthy Sygesmound,  
 And as þy fader, floure of hye prowess,  
 At þe gynnyng of his royal noblesse  
 Woyded al Cokil fer oute of Syon,  
 Crystes spouse sette in stabulnesse,  
 Outraying foreyns þat came frome Babylon. (73–88)

Lydgate draws from the familiar images and topics applied to heretics and “lollards” – namely the trope of the “Cokil” or heretical tare (86) seen also in Chaucer’s endlink to the *Man of Law’s Tale* (2.1182–83; see Chapter 4, 77–78) – but he curiously inserts these terms into the past: “Heretykes and Lollardes for to oppresse, / Lych þemperour, worthy Sygesmound,” thus neutralizing to some extent their contemporaneity. If “Heretykes and Lollardes” were around during the time of “Sygesmound,” then who are such persons now? The question is begged throughout this and other poems, because Lydgate never declares who “lollards” are or what they believe, never attempts to undo the allegory with a clarifying “right so.” Evidently, these heretics are as easy to summon from the poet’s imagination as they are for any given king to vanquish with a regal posture.

Evidently, if Lydgate knows something about “lollardy,” it is not the programmatic kind detailed in Chapters 2 and 3, where we saw that numerous orthodox persons conflated “lollardy” with a list of heretical conclusions, many originating from the Blackfriars Council of 1382. Not once in all his religious poems does he cite, much less deplore, those “lollard” versions of the sacrament of the altar that so scandalized late medieval religion from the 1380s on. Such a finding should not be so surprising when we step back and consider the breadth of Lydgate’s religious verse: a very small proportion of it is addressed to Lancastrian figureheads, and to that audience in particular does Lydgate embellish his verse with anti-Wycliffite slogans and clichés. The rest of his religious verse, however, is up for grabs, and it would be wrong for us to read it through the lens of his more propagandizing works or moments.<sup>5</sup> For quite simply, such verse, which is addressed to a range of audiences, is far more flexible, experimental, and – dare one say – even unorthodox in comparison to those familiar Lancastrian laudations.<sup>6</sup> Some of it even comes close to espousing Wycliffite models of the eucharist itself, and as we explore this suggestion here it will become increasingly clear that Lydgate would not rant and rail against “lollard” outsiders on account of his sense that Wycliffism itself is internal to present-day formulations about the eucharist. As we will see, Lydgate knows that a Wycliffite position on the eucharist – what is, in essence, a figural theology that is not invested in the *substantia* of sacramental presence – cannot be so easily expunged from orthodox thinking without relinquishing the forms of figural theology that suit poetry so well, especially Lydgate’s.

#### LYDGATE THE THEOLOGIAN

That initial claim about Lydgate’s eucharistic theology would seem already to gainsay a prevalent scholarly vision of fifteenth-century religious culture, much less critics’ sense of Lydgate’s capacities as a theologian and poet. It has always seemed to scholars that Lydgate was writing religious poetry at the wrong time, offering formulaic moral works that are characteristic of the age: “What we witness in the fifteenth century is not a decline, but a change of temper, or, to be more precise, a reassertion of orthodoxy,” writes Derek Pearsall.<sup>7</sup> It is now common for critics to view fifteenth-century secular writing, such as Hoccleve’s and Lydgate’s, as complex and critical as works written in the late fourteenth century (primarily by Chaucer), during which time – it is assumed – poets had greater license to speak against a variety of abuses.<sup>8</sup> Yet Pearsall’s claim about religious

orthodoxy and poetry still carries extraordinary weight, especially given the wide acceptance of Nicholas Watson's compelling thesis about religious writing in the shadow of an orthodoxy enforced by Archbishop Thomas Arundel by means of his Provincial Constitutions – one of “the most draconian pieces of censorship in English history, going far beyond its ostensible aim of destroying the Lollard heresy and effectively attempting to curtail all sorts of theological thinking and writing in the vernacular that did not belong within the pragmatic bounds set by earlier legislation like Pecham's *Syllabus* of 1281.”<sup>9</sup> Why would Lydgate experiment in “vernacular theology” if there is nothing to gain and so much to lose? Why would the poet, that so-called propagandist for the Lancastrians, offer anything else but a vernacular version of Lancastrian, anti-Wycliffite orthodoxy?

We can never be sure why he would. But we can be quite certain that he does. Primarily, Lydgate reveals himself to be at odds with some common and contemporary theological preoccupations involving the literary, liturgical, and imagistic associations between Christ's passion and the sacrament of the altar, associations that seem to characterize so-called “traditional religion” in late medieval England.<sup>10</sup> Two critics have noticed this oddity about Lydgate – Pearsall, in writing that “Lydgate wrote comparatively few poems on the Passion, and those that he did write have little to do with the tradition of intimate, passionate attachment to the body of Christ which plays so large a part in medieval lyric writing”;<sup>11</sup> and Miri Rubin, in finding that Lydgate “does not stress transubstantiation” right where we would expect to find it in, say, his exposition on the *Pater Noster*.<sup>12</sup> I concur with these views with a bit of added emphasis: what makes Lydgate extraordinary is his difference from those many authors who toe the orthodox line concerning “transubstantiation” and the inheritance of Christ's bloody body in the host under the appearance of bread.

This chapter offers (so far as I know) the first extended treatment of Lydgate's eucharistic theology and concludes that the poet's “body of Christ” is no ordinary one. My central exhibit will be, appropriately enough, Lydgate's “Procession of Corpus Christi,” which is datable to 1427–29.<sup>13</sup> Just by the title alone, which is a modern summary of John Shirley's description in Cambridge University, MS Trinity College, R.3.20, we realize that the aforementioned question of audience immediately pertains. While “Procession” is nowhere identified as a guild script or performance, we of course know that this poet wrote dramatic scripts – mummings – for

guild audiences such as the mercers.<sup>14</sup> And in the case of "Procession," by adopting the processional form as his poetico-theological enterprise, Lydgate works within a horizon of both audience and generic expectations that welcomed theological explorations beyond the juridical, scholastic, and canonical orthodoxies imagined by Archbishop Arundel and others.<sup>15</sup> As Rubin notes, "the acceptance, adoption and manipulation of the eucharistic symbol within the sphere of voluntary associations, and especially in that of patrician fraternities, was not necessarily tied to aggressive orthodoxy."<sup>16</sup> Admittedly, this cannot be said of all guild performances; my point is that what can be said of one Corpus Christi guild and its textual supports – "to honour the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist" – cannot be said of Lydgate's "Procession of Corpus Christi," particularly because the poet declares nothing of this sort and would seem instead to hew to the processional theologies described by Rubin.<sup>17</sup> In fact, his Corpus Christi poem looks distinctly different from a range of orthodox accounts of the sacrament of the altar, such as Nicholas Love's, John Mirk's, and a number of anonymous vernacular tracts, which time and again, defend transubstantiation against the imagined Wycliffite naysayers. This Lydgatean difference from "aggressive orthodoxy" suggests, as we will see, that the poet is equipped with a sophisticated theological understanding keen enough to expostulate on familiar topics in newly complicated ways, uniting poetic meditation, historical reflection, and theological exposition. In "Procession," he addresses the common eucharistic problems of his day concerning the substance of the consecrated eucharist, the fractioning of the wafer as a symbolic act of breaking Christ's body, and the medicinal properties of the sacrament. These problems (and they are old problems) dominated much of the debate between Wycliffite and anti-Wycliffite authors, as we will see below. But Lydgate resolves them not by taking sides but by placing the problems themselves in the hands of earlier authorities who, when viewed as a collection of authorities whose specific contributions to sacramental theology the poet well understands, demonstrate the poet's sustained interest in figural theology. Both by his arrangement of authorities and his selective citation of their views on the eucharist, Lydgate displays a sacramental way of thinking that always approaches Christ's bodily, sacramental presence not through scholastic thought experiments or rote iterations of belief but through language, metaphor, allegory, and, above all, poetry. There are indeed Wycliffite implications in this theology, and we will ruminate upon them in the final section of this chapter.

“A PROCESSION OF CORPUS CHRISTI”

Let's look at the text. Because I do not have space to attend to each and every stanza of the “Procession,” I have selected those that best represent Lydgate's theological *emphasis* in this work – how the poet responds to theological sources many of his contemporaries were reading and debating, such as works by Augustine, Peter Lombard, Jerome, and Aquinas. As we attend to the relevant stanzas – and Lydgate devotes one stanza to one authority – we will continually ask some probing questions to take us deep into his thinking. Why *this* authority? Why this arrangement of authorities? What do they contribute to eucharistic theology? Why does the poet deem them worthy of inclusion within this unfolding history of eucharistic thinking? If we fail to ask these questions, I believe we neglect the implications of his own theological choices.

Lydgate begins his “Procession” by declaring his theological and literary task:

þis day all derkenesse tenlumyne,  
In youre presence fette [*sic*] out of fygure,  
Schal beo declared by many vnkouþe signe  
Gracyous misteryes grounded in scripture. (5–8)

In order to declare those “Gracyous misteryes grounded in scripture,” Lydgate selects scriptural analogues to the sacrament of the altar ranging from the Old Testament to the New, rendering his “Procession” quite consistent with other dramatic forms – not only mystery cycles, which famously arc from the creation of humanity to the last judgment, but other contemporary works that have been seen to inform dramatic practices, such as the *Biblia Pauperum* and the *Speculum Humanae Salvationis*, the latter of which exists in a fifteenth-century translation, *Mirour of Mans Saluacioun*.<sup>18</sup> It so follows that Lydgate's history of the sacrament includes some predictable scriptural figures, Adam (11), Abraham (31–32), Issac (33), Jacob (46), Moses (49), and of course “Melchisedec” of Genesis 14.18–20, a common Old Testament figure “þat offred bred and wyne / In fygure ononly of þe sacrament” (18–19). The presence of all of these biblical authorities suggests that Lydgate is deploying the usual allegorical methods of pre-figuration, whereby Old Testament sacrifices, bread offerings, and gifts from the divine persons or their angelic mediators stand as instances of eucharistic foreshadowing. Similarly, Lydgate's treatment of New Testament figures (113–60) appears conventional. The stanza on “blessed Mark” (129), for instance, emphasizes the contemporaneity of the original eucharistic moment, the very utterances and gestures of the first

consecration: "To hees discyples, aforne er he arros, / Pis bred, my body, þis wyne, it is my bloode / Which þat for man dyed vppon þe crosse" (134–36). Lydgate's treatment of Paul (153–60), who warns that persons eat their own doom if they receive the eucharist unworthily (1 Cor. 11.29), is also conventional in view of contemporary versions.<sup>19</sup>

Yet when this poet turns to the post-scriptural authorities, to the very exegetes who render these scriptural passages intelligible in theological terms, it becomes clear that what seems at first conventional is anything but: we find Lydgate espousing a model of Real Presence that is strikingly distinct from those versions that characterize anti-Wycliffite orthodoxy.<sup>20</sup> Indeed, he could not have selected a more interesting authority to begin his survey of non-scriptural figures – an exegete who is the mainstay of academic commentary, but who is a curious contributor to sacramental theology:

He þat is cleped maystre of sentence,  
 Sette in a cloude holde here a fresshe ymage,  
 Remembreþe eeke by gret excellence,  
 In this mater avoyding al outrage,  
 Given to man here in oure pilgrymage,  
 Pis sacrament affter his doctryne  
 Is Crystis body, Repaste ["food"] of our passage,  
 By þe Holly Gooste take of a pure virgyne. (161–68)

Obviously, this is a reference to Peter Lombard, author of the *Sentences*, whose fourth book concerns the sacraments, with Distinction VIII committed exclusively to the sacrament of the altar. Peter's *Sentences* c.1153–55) was, as we know, the most widely commentated upon text in the late Middle Ages, second only to the Bible in all its forms and versions, and his fourth book on the sacraments is no exception. That Peter's work was a *locus classicus* in late medieval academic life does not mean that its historical particularity or its arguments should be abstracted as "yet another authority" in Lydgate's litany. For the fact of the matter is that the *Sentences* afforded a range of interpretations of the sacrament of the altar, and codified a number of relevant authorities – Augustine, Jerome, Ambrose, and Gregory – for subsequent thinking and argument. It especially offered resources for teasing out the intricacies and ambiguities of this (later) determination by the Lateran Council of 1215 that determined eucharistic orthodoxy until the Council of Trent: "His body and blood are *truly* contained in the sacrament of the altar under the forms of bread and wine, the bread and wine having been changed in substance [transsubstantiat], by God's power, into his body and blood,



so that in order to achieve this mystery of unity we receive from God what he received from us.”<sup>21</sup> What does it mean that “His body and blood are *truly* contained in the sacrament of the altar”? What is the meaning of “transsubstantiat”? By beginning his post-scriptural history with this authority, Lydgate attempts an answer by returning to an imagined beginning where the Real Presence meant many things, arguably many more things than in his day.

Before attending to Lydgate’s stanza, we can remind ourselves that nearly all university theologians in Peter Lombard’s time would assert the Real Presence of Christ in the sacrament; the later John Wyclif affirmed the same, as did his followers.<sup>22</sup> This means that affirmations of the notion of the Real Presence can by no means be fully indicative of a thinker’s position. Yet what always prevails in sacramental theology, in the thirteenth century as well as the fifteenth, is *emphasis*. Peter Lombard’s own view of the sacrament of the altar is telling in this regard. For he argues, among other things, that there are two kinds of eucharistic reception: sacramental and spiritual. In sacramental reception, individuals (whether pure or wicked) ingest Christ’s literal body, the very flesh.<sup>23</sup> Yet in “spiritual” reception, only pure and good individuals partake of Christ’s spiritual body, which Peter calls the “truth of the flesh”: “Et qui manducant spiritualiter, veritatem carnis et sanguinis [And he who eats spiritually eats the truth of the flesh and the blood].”<sup>24</sup> This second form of reception is most important to Peter. While he does not deny the Real Presence nor outright reject transubstantiation, they are not his primary concern nor subject to deep inquiry, for as he asserts: “Si autem quaeritur qualis sit illa conversio, an formalis, an substantialis, vel alterius generis, definire non sufficio [If, however, it is asked what manner is this (sacramental) conversion – whether formal, or substantial, or of another kind – I am not able to define it].”<sup>25</sup> Rather, for Peter, all inquiries into sacramental presence are in the name of what he views as the second, more “real,” and efficacious attribute of this sacrament – the spiritual, “true” body of Christ. It is on this foundation that he asserts his other points about the ubiquity of Christ’s “true” body, which is “in omni altari est ubicumque celebratur [on every altar wherever it is celebrated],”<sup>26</sup> and the indivisibility of that body, which is neither broken during the fraction of the eucharistic wafer or masticated during consumption.<sup>27</sup> By such distinctions does Peter insist on his *own orthodoxy* – “verum corpus Christi a fidelibus sumi vel in altari esse [that the true body of Christ is received by the faithful or that it is on the altar]”<sup>28</sup> – and in so doing he works his way out of the sacramental and metaphysical difficulties inherent in contemporary

interpretations of the sacrament, like those that imagined that even the proverbial mouse could consume the body of Christ, if a consecrated wafer happened to fall to the church floor. Needless to say, some of Peter's contemporaries considered his views heresy and judged Peter to be a revived Berengar sponsoring a strictly figural interpretation of the sacrament.<sup>29</sup> But the fact of the matter is, as Marcia Colish observes, that Peter's is a "middle-of-the-road position in relation to his contemporaries."<sup>30</sup>

Lydgate keys in to the relevant portions of the *Sentences*, referring to Peter's interpretations ("his doctryne" [166]). In the lines, "Given to man here in oure pilgrimage, / Pis sacrament affter his doctryne," he seems to follow literally Peter's life pilgrimage motif: "Unde recte *viaticum* appellatur quia in via nos reficiens, usque in patriam deducit [Wherefore the bread is rightly called a *viaticum* because it refreshes us along the way, and leads us to the fatherland]" – making it likely that the poet himself knows that Peter offers a "middle-of-the-road position" in fifteenth-century England.<sup>31</sup> Indeed, in the earliest eucharistic controversies in England, an orthodox friar, John Tislington, would acknowledge Peter's relevance to sacramental theology in a reply to Wyclif but would be careful to emphasize that this exegete was developing a eucharistic theology a number of years before Innocent III's Lateran Council and therefore could not have absorbed its lessons: "Magister Sententiarum præcessit tempus Innocentii per 51 annos [the Master of Sentences precedes the time of Innocent III by fifty-one years]."<sup>32</sup> Yet Lydgate reclaims Peter precisely for that reason in order to explore alternative versions of the Real Presence, versions notably different from, and more flexible than, those in the fifteenth century that follow the Lateran line.<sup>33</sup> In this light does his use of Peter seem precise: only "affter *his* doctryne" (166, my emphasis) can medieval Christians imagine the sacrament to be "Crystis body" (167).

It stands to reason that in his "Procession" Lydgate turns next to Jerome. Despite the fact that this turn to Jerome disrupts chronology, Lydgate rides the train of thought back in time to continue his exploration of divine substance, "corpus Christi," and its (in)divisibility:

Pe noble clerc, þe doctour ful famous,  
 Wryteþe and recordeþe Remembring truly  
 Geyns heretykes, hoolly Jeronimus,  
 Howe þat þis hoost is hole in ech partye,  
 Boþe God and man, Cryste Jhesus verrailly,  
 In eche partycle hoole and vnvedyded,  
 Pis oure byleve and creance feythfully,  
 Oute of oure hertes alle errors circumcyded. (169–76)

That the stanza on Peter Lombard is followed immediately by one on Jerome makes sense, for Lydgate is citing the theologian that Peter himself uses to extend his own theses about the “true [spiritual] body of Christ.” We have already reviewed the Lombard’s position – that while the actual wafer or host is fractioned, the resurrected, “true body of Christ” is not and is, by definition, unbreakable.<sup>34</sup> One authority among others whom Peter cites on this question is Jerome: “Unde Hieronymus: ‘Singuli accipiunt Christum Dominum, et in singulis portionibus totus est; nec per singulas minuitur, sed integrum se praebeat in singulis’ [Wherefore Jerome: ‘Every person receives Christ the Lord, and in the single pieces he is whole; nor is he diminished in a single part, but he offers himself entire in each’].”<sup>35</sup> Obviously, Lydgate’s stanza on Jerome, with its expression “Howe þat þis hoost is hole in ech partye,” appears similar to Peter’s “Jerome” (“and in the single parts he is entire”), even if Jerome’s authorship of this passage is, ultimately, doubtful.<sup>36</sup> In short, Lydgate’s Jerome is Peter’s Jerome.

But before we sort out the importance of this associative citation – whereby Lydgate cites Peter Lombard and then Peter’s Jerome – we have to bear in mind one additional layer of theological and historical reference: the question of the fractioned host in Lydgate’s day. Contemporary vernacular religious writers sought to affirm their own orthodoxy by defending the unity of Christ’s body against Wycliffian and Wycliffite accusations that an overly literalized version of Real Presence necessitates that the body of Christ is actually broken during the celebration of the sacrament, as we see in the defensive posture of “Of the Sacrament of the Altar”:

Whanne þe prest, to hit the wafer, goddis wordis hath spoken,  
 Crystys quyk body, vndir bred o cake.  
 Þou3 it a þousand peces seme broken,  
 Nes parted ne wasted, but all holl take.  
 In byleue of holychirche, who wyl hym 3oken,  
 A3en þis, non argument may make.  
 When þou to chirche gost  
 To resceyue god, wisely go.  
 I suppose þe prest haue but on ost,  
 Breke it, and parte to twenty and mo:  
 As moche is þe leste cost  
 As in þe grettest pece of þo;  
 Deme all yliche, lest and most;  
 Quae not, ne drede not, to sen hit so.

Pouȝ þe prest þe sacrament clyue  
 In a þowsand peces and þre,  
 Þe state, ne stature, ne myȝt doþ myue,  
 Ne leseþ ne lasseþ of his pouste.  
 Þy fleschly syȝt þou shalt not lyue<sup>37</sup>

Host miracles also supplement the orthodox account of the fractioned host and the bleeding body of Christ.<sup>38</sup> The urgency to recount such miracles only becomes amplified in the context of heresy trials, in which a position imputed to John Badby threateningly resonates:

et dicit, quod si esset ita, quod quaelibet hostia in altari consecrata esset corpus dominicum, quod tunc sunt 20. millia Deorum in Anglia; ipse tamen credit in unum Deum omnipotentem, quod non contradicit praefatus RRmus pater archiepiscopus Cantuar. Exposita alia conclusione, quod Christus sedens cum discipulis suis in coena, etc. Ad hanc dicit, quod esset sibi mirum, quod si quis haberet unum panem, et ipsum frangeret, et daret discipulis unum buccellum, quod idem panis postmodum integer remaneret.<sup>39</sup>

[And Badby said, that if it is thus, that every host consecrated at the altar is the Lord's body, that then there are twenty thousand gods in England; but he believed in one God omnipotent; which the aforesaid reverend father Archbishop of Canterbury did not dispute. When the other conclusion was expounded, that Christ sitting with his disciples at supper, etc. To this he said, that he himself would greatly marvel, that if any man had one loaf of bread, and should break that same loaf, and give to single disciple a morsel, the same loaf would remain whole afterwards.]

Lydgate has something to say about this contemporary problem, because he registers it in familiar terms: "Howe þat þis hoost is hole in ech partye, / . . . In eche partycle hoole and vndevyded" (171, 173).

For Lydgate, however, Jerome is the answer or frame of reference in which this particular issue of the fractioned host, the (in)divisible body of Christ, ought to be understood, and this is in itself an interesting move. For Lydgate takes Jerome as the frame in the same way that Peter Lombard does, and this sort of citation, as embedded as it may seem, succeeds in drawing attention to the entire oeuvre of Jerome and to the significance of this authority within sacramental theology: for historical as much as theological reasons, Jerome does not offer any statements on the eucharist as the bodily, Real Presence of Christ – and certainly none that resemble the positions in contemporary England.<sup>40</sup> That much is evident from a survey of those works that are most commonly cited in medieval sacramental theology, such as Jerome's commentary on Matthew<sup>41</sup> but

especially Ephesians, where he speaks of the indivisible “body of Christ” in terms that pertain specifically to *ecclesia*, to church and the communion of believers.<sup>42</sup> Specifically, on Ephesians 4.3–4,<sup>43</sup> Jerome writes:

This passage is especially useful against heretics who, when the “bond of peace” had been dispersed and destroyed, think that they hold “the unity of spirit,” whereas “the unity of the Spirit is preserved in the bond of peace” . . . The statement, however, “One body and one Spirit,” is to be understood to refer either simply to the one body of Christ which is the Church or, perhaps, to that body which he considered it worthy to assume from the virgin.<sup>44</sup>

Invariably, Jerome speaks only of the “body of Christ” that is the church, as his other comments on Ephesians indicate.<sup>45</sup> Just how insistent Jerome can be on this issue of the metaphorical body of Christ (and not the literal body) is demonstrated in the following, where he references the body and blood of the sacrament of the altar but calls for this understanding to be advanced into the metaphorical registers of sacramental theology:

Someone is of the opinion that the prophet [Matthew 6.11] is referring to the heavenly Bread of the Sacrament. We, indeed, accept such an exegesis, for it is truly the Body of Christ and truly the Blood of Christ [Et hoc quidem accipimus, quia uere caro Xpisti est, et uere sanguis Xpisti est]. Let us, however, push the interpretation a little further [Ceterum dicamus et aliter]. The Bread of Christ and His Body is divine utterance [sermo diuinus] and heavenly doctrine [doctrina caelestis]. Now whoever receives this bread and receives it with abundance, what happens to him? “The Lord sets captives free.” If this bread, the divine word and heavenly doctrine, refreshes our soul, it releases our feet immediately from their shackles.<sup>46</sup>

In some sense, Jerome consistently wants to “push the interpretation a little further.” And so does Lydgate.

Again, it has been noted by Pearsall that Lydgate does not fixate on Christ’s bleeding body, and what we find here is a genuinely authoritative reason why – or better, how: Jerome. His emphasis on the fractioned host is not that of his contemporaries – “þe blod is drynk, þe flesh is mete” (“Of the Sacrament of the Altar,” 57) – but rather one that foregrounds communion and the body of Christ that is the church. Lydgate, in other words, takes the contemporary issue of Christ’s indivisible, fleshly body as it inheres in the host and frames it with an Hieronymian understanding of Christ’s body as a social body.<sup>47</sup> This would appear to be an interesting move, especially if Lydgate is writing the sort of “urban theology” that, in the processional display especially, sutures social divisions and hierarchies in the name of a sacrament of unity and community.<sup>48</sup> The poet has selected a motif, in other words, relevant to the processional experience

itself. He has also chosen an authority who, even in Lydgate's day, challenges the expected orthodox position.

We move on. In his stanza on Augustine, Lydgate displays a technique similar to that instanced in the stanza on Jerome<sup>49</sup> – the technique of embedded and highly contextualized citation:

Blessed Austyne reherseþe in sentence,  
 “Whan Cryste is ete or resceyved in substaunce,<sup>50</sup>  
 Pat lyff is eten of heavenly excellence,  
 Oure force, oure might, our strenkeþe, oure suffisaunce,  
 Qwykenyng oure herte with al goostly plesaunce,  
 Repast ay lasting, Restoratyff ternal,  
 And remedy geynst al oure olde grevaunce  
 Brought Ine by byting of an appul smale. (185–92)

Lydgate is referring to that commonplace, mechanical view of the eucharist, its special powers to cure ailments and restore physical vigor. This standard, orthodox idea mostly finds expression in host miracles, sermons, and poems on the sacraments – all to prove against doubters, heretics, and Jews that the miracle of this sacrament is really Real and that transubstantiation must at all points be verified.<sup>51</sup> It is an idea that prevails in all sorts of contemporary, orthodox sacramental theology in late medieval England.

If we grant, however, that Lydgate's reference to this view is anchored within the broader context of Augustine's own work, then a different and perhaps more startling reading appears – one that is consistent with the poet's handling of other authorities as alternatives. In speaking of the eucharist as “Qwykenyng oure herte with al goostly plesaunce” (189) and, in the same breath, citing Augustine as the author of that view (and not the more likely candidate, Paul [Romans 7.4–6]), Lydgate must be pointing us to Augustine's various and, as we shall soon see, prominent commentaries on John 6.64: “spiritus est qui vivificat caro non prodest quicquam verba quae ego locutus sum vobis spiritus et vita sunt [It is the spirit that quickeneth: the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I have spoken to you, are spirit and life].”<sup>52</sup> More to the point, the larger scriptural context of this verse, along with Augustine's reading, throws some interesting light on Lydgate's stanza, and how it offers a direct, even if allusive, criticism of those models of Real Presence that assert that believers are eating Christ's flesh.<sup>53</sup>

The problem begins in the Gospel of John, where some of Jesus's disciples (“discipuli”) wonder whether the “bread of life [panis vitae]” (John 6.48) or the “living bread [panis vivus]” (6.51) should be understood

literally, whether when the risen Christ says, "For my flesh is meat indeed: and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood abideth in me, and I in him [Caro enim mea vere est cibus et sanguis meus vere est potus. Qui manducat meam carnem et bibit meum sanguinem in me manet et ego in illo]" (John 6.56–57), he is proposing that his disciples eat, cannibalistically, his very flesh. Here is Augustine's account of this scriptural event in sacramental terms in his *Enarrationes*, which he draws into his exegesis of Psalm 99 [98]:

And because He walked here in very flesh, and gave that very flesh for us to eat for our salvation; and no one eats that flesh, unless he has first worshiped . . . But does the flesh give life? Our Lord Himself, when He was speaking in praise of this same earth, said, "It is the Spirit that quickens, the flesh profits nothing" . . . But when our Lord praised it, He was speaking of His own flesh, and He had said, "Except a man eat My flesh, he shall have no life in him" [John 6.54]. Some disciples of His, about seventy, were offended, and said, "This is an hard saying, who can hear it?" And they went back, and walked no more with Him. It seemed unto them hard that He said, "Except you eat the flesh of the Son of Man, you have no life in you:" they received it foolishly, they thought of it carnally, and imagined that the Lord would cut off parts from His body, and give unto them; and they said, "This is a hard saying." It was they who were hard, not the saying; for unless they had been hard, and not meek, they would have said unto themselves, He says not this without reason, but there must be some latent mystery herein [sacramentum latens].<sup>54</sup>

Augustine then goes on to paraphrase Jesus's message in a scriptural passage (John 6.56, 58) that would seem, absent of explication, to support the notion of the Real Presence as a corporal one:

Understand spiritually what I have said; you are not to eat this body which you see; nor to drink that blood which they who will crucify Me shall pour forth [spiritualiter intellegite quod locutus sum; non hoc corpus quod uidetis, manducaturi estis, et bibituri illum sanguinem, quem fusuri sunt qui me crucifigent]. I have commended unto you a certain mystery [Sacramentum]; spiritually understood, it will quicken. Although it is needful that this be visibly celebrated [uisibiliter celebrari], yet it must be spiritually understood [inuisibiliter intellegi].<sup>55</sup>

There are numerous, related passages that Lydgate could cite or paraphrase in the name of Augustine, all of which come to the same conclusions; similarly, he could cite those scriptural passages (which Peter Lombard notes are appropriated by those advancing sacramental heresies<sup>56</sup>) and then re-explain them in accordance with proper fifteenth-century orthodoxy.<sup>57</sup> But he does not. For he finds it acceptable enough to phrase the issue, under the banner of Augustine, in this fashion: "Whan Cryste is

ete or resceyved in substaunce, / Pat lyff is eten of hevenly excellence" (186–87); in other words, the "substaunce" of the host is "lyff," that which spiritually quickens; it is not flesh or body, consumed actually.<sup>58</sup> Lydgate is saying that the Real Presence ought to be, as Augustine has it, "spiritually understood."<sup>59</sup> It is an interpretation distinctly different from other orthodox appropriations of John 6.54, which emphasize the fleshly presence of Christ in this bread.<sup>60</sup>

Lydgate's final authority is Thomas Aquinas:

Pis hoolly Thomas, called of Algywyne,  
By hie myracle þat sawghe persones three,  
An ooste ful rounde, a sunne about it shyne,  
Joyned in oon by parfyte vnytee,  
A glorious liknesse of þe Trynitee,  
Gracyous and digne for to beo comended,  
With feyth, with hope, with parfyte charitee,  
Al oure byleeve is þere Inne comprehended. (209–16)

It is telling that Lydgate ends at yet another beginning – a beginning embodied by the Office of Corpus Christi itself, said to be authored by Aquinas.<sup>61</sup> What is interesting, furthermore, is that this is not the Aquinas who was favored in fifteenth-century discussions on the sacrament concerning the necessary verbal exactitude in the words of confection: "It is clear that, if anything is subtracted of those things which are of the substance of the sacramental form the required sense of the words is taken away and, consequently, the sacrament is not accomplished."<sup>62</sup> Rather, Lydgate is alluding to another Aquinas, the biographical Aquinas who can be found in William of Tocco's *vita*, wherein we hear that the theologian's last days were dignified by a divine vision of Christ praising Aquinas's writings on the eucharist. Lydgate is engaging in selective citation just one last time, offering an Aquinas who remains important to the devotional treatment of the eucharist at hand but whose ideas on the metaphysics of Real Presence – so much the orthodox authority in late medieval England – are bracketed.<sup>63</sup> None of this is to say that Lydgate denies the Real Presence – nothing like the formulation seen in the heresy trials, where bishops impute to various suspects statements that are themselves orthodox formulae about heresy: "after the words of consecration the material bread remains." Rather, and as we have come to expect now, Lydgate will have nothing of that sort of orthodoxy and will consistently avoid the view that, in the words of the author of "Of the Sacrament of the Altar," "In-to flesch passeþ þe bred."<sup>64</sup>



For our poet, as it is for any other theologian who aspires towards complexity, sacramental theology is a matter of emphasis. And Lydgate emphasizes another presence altogether. Because his account of Aquinas's vision describes the eucharistic wafer as a "glorious liknesse of þe Trynitee," the presence at issue here is that of the triune Godhead itself, which is comprised, as Aquinas himself explains, of hypostatic substance "subsisting in the divine nature." Accordingly, this substance is not fleshly, human, or even physical, and for that reason, any issues of Christ's humanity, Real Presence, or existence under the "accidents" of bread are tangential.<sup>65</sup> Indeed, much orthodox theology on the eucharist explains in philosophical terms how in transubstantiation the accidents of the bread remain while the substance of Christ's crucified body exists under them: "the accidentals continue to exist in their effect in the new substance [accidencia existant in actus suos sine subiecto]."<sup>66</sup> Yet for the Trinitarian, hypostatic substance, the accidents are the substance, and the substance is neither bread nor Christ's humanity. It is divine, singular, and undivided. By citing, then, Aquinas's Trinitarian experience – and by implication his Trinitarian theology – Lydgate eschews post-Wycliffite sacramental theologies that would ponder whether accidents can exist apart from their corresponding substances within the host.<sup>67</sup> In so doing, he offers a bold, allusive, historicist, and deeply theological alternative to the more systematic eucharistic theologies of his day.

#### FIGURAL EUCHARISTS, LITERARY THEOLOGIES

All of the poet's references to post-scriptural authorities in "Procession" (Peter Lombard, Jerome, Gregory, Augustine, Ambrose, Peter Comestor, Thomas Aquinas) are conscientious and studied. In some cases, the name of the authority itself signifies a model of eucharistic presence not reducible to fifteenth-century versions. In other cases, the poet's emphasis about the authority's contribution to the history of eucharistic theology is decidedly slanted. For instance, of Ambrose, he pens these lines:

Ambrosius, with sugerd elloquence,  
 Wryteþe with his penne and langage laureate,  
 With Crystis worde substancial in sentence,  
 "Pe sacrament is Justely consecrate  
 Oure daily foode, Renuwyng oure estate [""] . . . (193–97)

Lydgate's emphasis is telling because Ambrose, of all the names cited, could well be seen as the earliest authority justifying a model of sacramental conversion and Real Presence that would look something like those

versions in Lydgate's day.<sup>68</sup> That Ambrose is nowhere present, however. Instead, we find the Ambrose of "langage laureate" (194), for whom the question of sacramental substance is primarily a question of language – sugared, eloquent language at that.<sup>69</sup> In no other stanza does Lydgate bring the interests of poetry and sacramental theology so closely together where the substance of poetry is the matter of theology, and vice versa.

But what transpires in this stanza takes place throughout the entirety of the "Procession," which exhibits an interest in form – specifically in "fygure," "liknesse," and formalized versions of presence. For instance, recall the first lines of the poem, where Lydgate diverts the question of sacramental presence to a rumination on his own presentation and its reception by an audience: "In youre presence fette out of fygure" (6). It is important to know that he ends his poem in the same way he begins it – with a reflection on "figures" and "youre presence":

With þeos figures shewed in youre presence,  
By diuers liknesses you to doo plesaunce,  
Resceiueþe hem with devoute reverence,  
Þis bred of lyfe yee kepe in Remembraunce  
Oute of þis Egipte of worldely grevaunce,  
Youre restoratyff celestyal manna,  
Of which God graunt eternal suffysaunce  
Where aungels sing everlasting Osanna. (217–24)

Doubtless, one comes to expect the language of figuration to appear prominently in a discussion of the sacraments, but are the figures themselves to be taken as sacraments? With a line such as, "Resceiueþe hem with devoute reverence," Lydgate would seem to suggest so. For he transforms the issue of sacramental reception cited throughout the poem but especially in his stanza on Paul ("resceiue it . . . yif he beo clene" [160]) into one of figural reception and literary interpretation (clearly the antecedents of "Resceiueþe hem" are "þeos figures" [217] and "diuers liknesses" [218]). The novelty of this conflation of eucharistic reception and poetic interpretation – that is, sacramental and literary signs – emerges even by the briefest mention of Aquinas's own sacramental semiotic in which sacraments are signs but not just any signs fusible with others: they are "sensible signs of invisible things by which man is sanctified [sensibilia signa invisibilium rerum quibus homo sanctificatur]." Likewise, not all signs, not all figures and metaphors, are sacraments to be received worthily.<sup>70</sup> And here lies the issue. Lydgate collapses these semiotic distinctions and produces truly sacramental poetry meant to be reverently received in anticipation of the eucharistic consumption itself. To boot, by

offering these reflections in the vernacular, he achieves a mode of sacramental reflection as searchingly consistent – indeed, as plainly sacramental – as those offered by William Langland and the York Corpus Christi cycle.<sup>71</sup>

Our purpose now is to discern the significance of the poet's sacramental poetry, his figural expression, in the post-Wycliffite context, in which ideas about sacramental language were various and not limited to the words of consecration – “Hoc est enim meum corpus” – that were, from the “Hoc” to the “corpus,” interpreted widely among Wycliffite and orthodox parties.<sup>72</sup> Rather, the related issues of “form” and “figure” mattered as intensely. Typically, “figure” denotes “the appearance or shape” of a given thing, as well as its very substance, the “figure” as “body.”<sup>73</sup> Yet such familiar (and opposing) definitions remain problematic when they have to be explained in polemic and political contexts, much less in a heresy trial or in a public, processional poem where scholastic idiom is hardly the lingua franca. The problem is that simply stating the old formulation prevalent since Archbishop John Pecham's pastoral syllabus – that the sacrament “is verrey Goddis body in fourme of brede”<sup>74</sup> – no longer sufficed in fifteenth-century England. It certainly does nothing to affirm one's orthodoxy. What we find is that any statements concerning the “form” of the sacrament were only a first step, the beginning of a movement towards doctrinal clarification or assertion. And it is in such clarification that the nature and limits of any given sacramental theology can be discerned, and where the litmus test of “How formal are you?” is applied.

For those strictly orthodox authors, the answer to that question is, “Not very much.” But for Wycliffites, the answer is, “quite a bit, as long as form is a way of thinking outside of scholastic, neo-Aristotelian ideas about the sacramental substance.” The poet of “Jack Upland” (who is himself clearly a clerk) represents this latter view:

Frere, whi sclandre 3e trewe preestis & opere trewe meke men of þe sacrament of Goddis bodi, for þei seien þat þe holi breed duli sacrid is Goddis bodi in foorme of breed, and 3e seien þat it is an accident wiþ outen subiect, & not Goddis bodi.<sup>75</sup>

To some extent, this heterodox author is right, as we saw above in the words of the orthodox, Franciscan creator of the *Fasciculus Morum*: “accidencia existant in actus suos sine subiecto [accidents exist in their effect without a subject].”<sup>76</sup> Yet the orthodox author of “Friar Daw's Reply” answers the heterodox “Jack Upland” by acknowledging the problems of

“figure” but also criticizing the Wycliffite position on “foorme” – which is, to him, namely a lack of a position:

Iak, we seie wiþ Holy Chirche þat þer is Cristis bodi,  
 & not material breed with Wiclyf 3our maistir,  
 Þe whiche put þer but as a signe & not verre Cristis bodi,  
 Aftir a manere spekyng þat Holy Chirche vsiþ –  
 As we clepen Crist a stoon, a lomb, & a lioun,  
 & noon of þese is Crist but oonli in figure.<sup>77</sup>

It becomes apparent when reading this passage against its complement above that the authors are at cross-purposes, neither fully engaging the claims proffered by the other, yet each proclaiming that his version of sacramental form is the correct one. The position of so-called “Friar Daw” is twofold: first, it is to say that the Wycliffites fail to understand properly the allegorical significance of sacramental forms; instead, Wycliffites are accused of believing that “Cristis bodi” is only “material breed”; second, it is to insist that a “manere of spekyng” is figural language itself: one can name a number of figural associations (and not substantial equivalences) between “Crist a stoon, a lomb, & a lioun,” but none “is Crist,” but only a “figure” of Christ. As if to ward off any mistaken impressions that Friar Daw is subscribing to a strictly figural sacramental theology – for, after all, Wycliffites frame the issue of figuration in quite similar terms<sup>78</sup> – this author elaborates on his theology:

And now I wil þee telle þe freris confiteor  
 Touching to þis sacrament how þat þei bileuen.  
 Þei seie breed is turned in to fleish, & wyne in to blood,  
 Pour3 þe myzt of oure God & vertue of his wordis:  
 Þe fleish is mete, þe blood is drynke, & Crist dwelliþ,  
 No þing rasyd, no þing diuidid, but oonli broken in signe,  
 & as moche is in oo partie as is al þe hole.  
 Þer leueþ not of þe breed but oonli þe licnesse,  
 Which þat abidiþ þerinne noon substeyned substans;<sup>79</sup>

Now we are on strictly orthodox territory with the added insistence that “breed is turned in to fleish, & wyne in to blood.” In the assertion that “Þer leueþ not of þe breed but oonli þe licnesse,” this author intends to countermand the postulated Wycliffite position on form, even if the assertion about “oonli þe licnesse” does not make the problem of form or appearances disappear. After all, how does the “licnesse” of bread that looks, tastes, and feels like bread differ, phenomenologically, from “real”

bread whose essence is equally distant and always subject to “appearance” itself? Is “licness” different from “form”? The opposition between form and figure, on the one hand, and “licnesse” on the other would have been unknown just twenty years before, as in the *Lay Folks’ Catechism*, which exchanges the Pechamite emphasis on “form” with “likeness,” when it speaks of “Cristes owen bodi in likeness of brede.”<sup>80</sup> The persistent problem is that “licnesse” remains “form” on a very basic level – “accidentals continue to exist in their effect” – and brings the two positions rather close to one another, in so far as the problems of appearance and quality (of taste, of whiteness, of roundness, of bread) remain: “the true flesh of Christ tastes like bread [vera caro Christi habet saporem panis].”<sup>81</sup> Both parties accept form. Yet both propose different understandings of what is behind the form, and while that is where the real or substantial disagreement happens, so much argumentation is nonetheless expended on strictly formal problems because they are the most evident and the most tricky.

For his part, Lydgate does not go behind appearances and, so being, never has to go beyond form and pose it as a problem. Indeed, in his “Procession of Corpus Christi,” he takes form as the solution. Can it be said, then, that his is a figural theology? Throughout this poem, he signals the importance of “form” and “licness” but treats them as synonyms (“figure,” “form,” and “likeness”), emphasizing the formal issues of sacramental theology and leaving aside the substantial turn that all such terms require in contemporary orthodox theology. And in the combination of these versions of “figure” – allegorical, sacramental, imagistic, formal – we can appreciate Lydgate’s response to the demand in sacramental theology that distinctions between form and body, figure and flesh, must be kept in place. For his part, Lydgate understands that “figure” designates *both* form and body; the figure is the substance, the form is the content. For example, in the last stanza (discussed above), Lydgate resists the turn towards the sacramental thing-in-itself in any confident scholastic sense. In another stanza, he redirects the question of interiority to psychological conditions (“To vs figureþe in oure Inwarde sight” [55], “who so looke aright” [53]), keeping his sacramental metaphors as precisely that, surfaces and images at a distance from the thing itself but which mirror other surfaces and images, whereby the best approach to understanding or “knowing” the sacrament is through similitude and associative, figural thinking.

Other poems in Lydgate’s oeuvre verify this literary theology. For instance, in “The Interpretation and Virtues of the Mass,” Lydgate cites

the common expression, "In forme of brede," but then quickly lightens its interpretive burden through careful insertions of the term "fygure":

Tokyn that Iesu, our souerayne and our lorde,  
 Agayne our febylnesse and our impotence,  
 Left on the Awter callyd Crystes owne borde  
 Hys body, hys blood, relyques of most reuerence,  
 We to receue hem with deuoute diligence,  
 In forme of brede and wyne for a memory,  
 Fygure that the chyef lambe of Innocence  
 Offryd vp hys body, grounde of our offertory.  
 Thow art in fygure, O blessyd lord Iesu!

(281–88, 369; see also 321–22, 343)

What is clear here is that the problem of "forme of brede and wyne" is quickly reconfigured into a figural idea in its own right. The assertion, "Thow art in fygure, O blessyd lord Iesu!," keeps the standard locution, "In forme of brede and wyne," on the figural surface, yet grammatically asserts that the problem of sacramental being ("Thow art") is simultaneously the problem of sacramental form ("in fygure"). If we can heed the familiar dictum that "poetry is thinking" (or, *denkerische Dichtung*), then we can see that in this meditation, the sequence of lines indicates a phenomenological thought process, always associative and authentically disinterested in essences, substances, or fleshly bodies.

It so follows that Lydgate breaks apart the traditional allegiances between sacramental theology and allegory that work to bring us to the thing itself. For by his account, there is no figurative supersession, no discarding of form for the sake of substance or meaning, as many common uses of the term "figure" demand, as in Jesus's preparations for the Last Supper in the Chester Cycle: "Therefore make haste, that we may soon / all figures clean reject."<sup>82</sup> While Lydgate is happy to adopt this kind of figurative supersession for a poem such as "*Letabundus*" – "The light was cloos, hyd undir figure . . . / Cristes birth hath voyded oold figurys. / The husk is falle, brokyn is the shale"<sup>83</sup> – he refuses this figural shedding in his "Procession of Corpus Christi," for the very reason that his notion of the "fygure" does not involve the typological sense of "concealment," whereby in time the figure is removed, the body exposed. There is no body here, in the way Friar Daw imagines it. For Lydgate, there is only a sacramental body, there is only form.

In the final analysis it is important to acknowledge that, when Lydgate explores the psychological conditions necessary for sacramental reception,

he works his way to a Wycliffite idea about the centrality of figural meaning in sacramental theology. It is true that all sacramental theology is by definition figural theology. But it is a matter of degree and, again, emphasis; and on both counts, Lydgate's "Procession," the entirety of its argument and emphases, parallels a Wycliffite view like the following: "Also seynt Yllarie seiþ þat Cristis body þat is take of þe auter is boþe figure and truþe: hit is figur þe while bred and wyn ben sene wiþoute forþe, and it is truþe þe while it is beleueed wiþinne forþe to be Cristis body in truþe."<sup>84</sup> Accordingly, "Cristis body" only appears "wiþinne forþe" when "it is beleueed." This Wycliffite (like Lydgate) avoids the oppositions between "form" and "substance" and posits instead a different set of oppositions between "figure" and "truth" that are themselves consonant with Peter Lombard's own emphasis on the "truth of the flesh" discussed above.<sup>85</sup> The Wycliffite author of "De oblatione iugis sacrificii," which is the most sophisticated vernacular statement on the eucharist I have seen, writes similarly that "þe sacrid oost þat is þe blessid bodi . . . is boþe figure and truth"<sup>86</sup> – with the effect that the "bodi" is always "figural," always "true," but never, as the Fourth Lateran ruling had it, "truly contained in the sacrament of the altar under the forms of bread and wine." Lydgate's figural theology approaches that of the Wycliffites because the poet (like the Wycliffites) both rejects the orthodox position on the eucharist, which became reified after the Blackfriars Council, and explores the potential of figural forms of devotional expression and reflection, the generation of substance out of figural meditation. For his part, Lydgate does not worry about whether his version of the eucharist looks Wycliffite. He offers no disclaimers or apologies, no talk of "lollards." He is satisfied enough to ground his exploration within the history of theology – an historicizing move that confirms the innovation of his own lyrical sacramentality.

PART IV

*Feeling Wycliffite*





*Margery Kempe's "lollard" shame*

Shame is by nature recognition. Sartre<sup>1</sup>

Any conclusion that the *Book of Margery Kempe* expresses the cultural issues of its day – especially those related to Wycliffism, heresy, and “lollardy” – is bound not to surprise. In the *Book*, we hear of Sir John Oldcastle, purported leader of a “lollard” rebellion in 1414 who was eventually executed for heresy and treason in 1417 (see Chapter 5, 107–08). We also encounter the most prominent persecutors of Wycliffites such as archbishops Thomas Arundel and Henry Bowet, as well as Wycliffism’s most distinguished academic opponents, such as Thomas Netter, who attended the 1410 trial of John Badby – the first layman ever to be burned for his views on the eucharist – and sat at the Council of Constance in 1415,<sup>2</sup> which belatedly deemed Wyclif a heretic and ordered his bones to be exhumed and burned along with his writings. Finally, we find many passages in the *Book* where clerks and laypersons alike call Kempe a “lollard” for her preaching of scripture in English, her distaste for swearing, and her advocating the rights of women to preach. Many threaten to burn her as a heretic for these practices.<sup>3</sup> It is a matter of course, then, that this book should conclude with a discussion of Kempe, because her *Book* canvasses some of the major themes I have been tracing throughout: Kempe is among the authors who both declare their differences from the juridical forms of orthodoxy that would condemn Wycliffism as heresy and who uses the social typology of the “lollard” to offer a new perspective on late medieval religiosity.

In reading Kempe’s *Book*, this chapter explores two issues related to “lollard” typologies in the fifteenth century. The first, which will be explored in the first part of this chapter, seeks to answer the most pressing question, Why is there so much “lollardy” in Kempe’s work? Are these idle references or is there something more here? In addressing these questions, this chapter will pick up the line of investigation laid down in Chapters 2 and 3 concerning “lollardy” as a social and theological

form – only this time we shall be regarding “lollardy” as an affective form, a site of a new discourse of shame.<sup>4</sup> Here, I shall argue, Kempe adapts the figure of the “lollard” for the sake of clarifying her own affective piety but not for the purpose of expressing views that may or may not be described or perceived as “lollard” and ultimately evocative of the Blackfriars condemnations of 1382. Instead, I want to explore how she repeatedly assumes the affects of the shameful, crying “lollard” – a form of “lollardy” that is central to her own devotional program, which focuses on a desire to be shamed in her love for Christ. For Kempe, the importance of this sort of “lollardy” lies in the opportunities it provides to correct the mistaken views her contemporaries have of her piety and to supersede, again and again, the reified and oppositional constructs of heterodoxy and orthodoxy that are so often applied to her. Indeed, the mystical, moral, and ethical imperatives of the *Book* depend on this repeated supersession and on a continual return to “lollardy,” which defines in very palpable terms the limits of Kempe’s commitment to martyrdom – the ultimate ramification of her very public form of religiosity, though not a result she seeks in the end. Notably, with the “lollard” typology, Kempe transforms the discourses of shame exhibited in earlier mysticisms, such as Christina of Markyate, Angela of Filigno, Marguerite Porete, Bridget of Sweden, Richard Rolle, Walter Hilton, and Julian of Norwich. This transformation evinces the extent to which Wycliffite models of “lollard” shame directly infuse her *Book*. Below I assess how Kempe exceeds these “lollard” models of shame by turning them into a kind of spiritual “comfort,” but the significant point to be insisted on, in the end, is that Kempe and the Wycliffites bear more commonalities on the problem of shame than perhaps any other two authors, or groups of authors.<sup>5</sup>

The second issue related to “lollardy” involves the negation of heresy – specifically, a person’s recantation of it. In traditional consistory practice, heretics are forgiven if they confess their heresies and perform the proper penances assigned by their respective bishop. But to forgive is never to forget: if a former heretic relapses, he or she can be executed according to provisions publicly broadcast by the secular arm in the 1401 statute, *De heretico comburendo*.<sup>6</sup> By necessity, I argue, the recanted heretic is inevitably a member of an exceptional sort of orthodoxy or an orthodoxy of exceptions, whereby the heretical past is never forgotten and is always a matter of record and sometimes, as in the case of medieval England’s most well-known recanted heretic, a matter of public record. That recanted heretic is Philip Repingdon, once a leading disciple of John Wyclif. Yet after recanting in 1382, he enjoyed an illustrious career not only as the

Bishop of Lincoln but also as English cardinal, Chancellor of Oxford University (1400–03), confessor and chaplain to Henry IV, and advisor to Henry V.<sup>7</sup> But things were not as easy or as publicly glorious as that. In fifteenth-century England, contemporary witnesses were deeply ambivalent about Repingdon's status as a recanted heretic and, as such, they offer valuable testimony for historians of Wycliffism: they not only allow us to chart the public reception of a former Wycliffite heretic, but they present to us the broader conceptual difficulty about the status of the recanted within the English church, which I suggest is a distinctly fifteenth-century problem owing to the increasing number of persons reincorporated back into the fold after having been charged with heresy. The early fifteenth century is, after all, the moment of the Norwich heresy trials. Kempe enters into this discourse, I suggest, by figuring forth Repingdon in her *Book* and then strongly identifying with him. While scholars have shown that Kempe continually struggles to legitimize her own religiosity within the normative discourse of identity in late medieval England, we can now acknowledge that she is particularly keen to validate her life in relation to Repingdon, the recanted heretic, more than any other ecclesiastical dignitary, because he embodies publicly and figuratively the kind of identity that neither orthodox nor heterodox contemporaries can fully fathom or claim as their own, precisely the sort of situation that distinguishes Kempe's own sense of self as caught between extremes. It is not surprising, then, that Kempe's relationship with Repingdon, as it is imagined in the *Book*, involves an affective commitment to shame. This relationship is so fundamental to Kempe that her encounter with Repingdon is recorded as providing the initial impetus for writing the very work we now know as the *Book of Margery Kempe*.

#### "LOLLARD" SHAME

We should begin with the general problem of identity in Kempe's *Book* before attending to "lollard" identities and then more broadly to the issue of Repingdon. It is quite easy to see that Kempe is displeased with anyone who regards her identity as contradictory, split, or binary, and not surprisingly she expresses this displeasure when secular authorities take her to prison as a supposed heretic or when church officials suspect that she might be a "lollard." On these occasions, such persons marvel at who, or what, she is, and then proclaim such things as: "Eythyr thow hast the Holy Gost or ellys thow hast a devyl wythin the" (94); "Thu schalt telle me whethyr thu hast this speche of God er of the devyl" (231); "Eythyr thu

art a ryth good woman er ellys a ryth wikked woman" (232); "Sum of the pepil askyd whedyr sche wer a Cristen woman er a Jewe? Sum seyde sche was a good woman, and sum seyde 'nay'" (249).<sup>8</sup> On the one hand, Kempe is showing how any judgment of her identity is in moral terms a sin of (mis)judgment and in epistemological terms extremely limited and partial. On the other, she shows how binaries themselves, at least when it comes to assessing her identity, are always already impossible, posed by persons who cannot distinguish between the demonic and the divine, the heterodox and orthodox.

These Kempian lessons about identity are especially important to remember for a study that admittedly appears at the end of a series of distinguished readings of the *Book* in relation to contemporary English dissent. Yet in taking stock of those readings, we can see that critics evaluate Kempe's religious identity according to similar sorts of binaries, and these, of course, naturally turn on the axes of heterodoxy and orthodoxy – particularly, the heterodoxies involving ecclesiology. For instance, Nancy Partner suggests that "her belief was simple and orthodox . . . [h]er style was Lollard."<sup>9</sup> Denise Despres understands that "[w]hile the Lollard heresy of Margery's day gave her forthright observations about clerical corruption[,] and her application of scripture to contemporary problems[,] dangerous implications, the spirit of her teaching was Franciscan and orthodox in origins."<sup>10</sup> Ruth Nissé argues that Kempe "demonstrates her orthodoxy by her actions while signaling heterodox concerns and interpretations"; "Kempe appropriates Lollardy as anticlerical satire, capturing the force of Wycliffite critique while affirming her own orthodoxy."<sup>11</sup> Even Lynn Staley, who most successfully reads the social text of Kempe's *Book*, describes "Kempe" as an orthodox author who expresses unorthodox views through a fiction of dissent involving the often heterodox persona of "Margery": Staley writes, "Though her views are orthodox, the implications of her actions and beliefs are less so."<sup>12</sup>

Let me not be mistaken in saying that Kempe's modern critics are tantamount to her medieval detractors or that it can be denied that even Kempe herself constantly seeks affirmation either from God or from priests that her visions are indeed holy and not inspired by the fiend. But we might bear in mind that these distinctions between substance and style, message and implication, are more beneficial to us as constructs in explaining Kempe's unusual identity than they are in discerning the historical or contemporaneous features of an identity that refuses such distinctions in the first place. As the *Book* has it: "Sche myht no lengar kepyn the fire of lofe clos wythinne hir brest, but, whethyr sche wolde er

not, it wolde aperyn wythowteforth swech as was closyd wythinneforth" (337). Substance is style. Style is substance. When Kempe is called a "lollard" in the *Book*, we are meant to see this identification as a *mistake*; as she tell us: "Other which had no knowlach of hir maner of governawns, save only be syght owtforth er ellys be jangelyng of other personys, perverting the dom of trewth, seyde ful evyl of hir and causyd hir to have meche enmyte and meche dysese, more than sche schuld have ellys had, had her evyl langage ne ben" (123). In many ways, this statement functions as a principle of reading for Kempe as a whole. We are not meant to follow her accusers' lead to discern how their mistake may in fact be partially correct, permitting us in turn to pinpoint what is necessarily heretical or "Wycliffite" about her various utterances and postures, or what is orthodox about the same, or both. This, I believe, leads to a confusion of terms and, at worst, a potentially anachronistic sense of medieval identities, not the least of which is that of the "lollard." Rather, we ought to ask what sort of historical lessons about identity she is teaching us when its most salient and troublesome features appear in legal settings and secular contexts, where the binaries between correct and incorrect faith, between political conformity and treasonous "lollardy," are all too easily generated. We ought to consider how her trouble with "lollardy" pertains to her mystical project of overcoming these binaries by affective means.

So we ask: why does Kempe face, time and again, charges of "lollardy" only to escape them in ways that are often entirely alien to the procedures of a consistory court? For example, after escaping a dangerous inquisition in Canterbury, two "fayr yong men" approach her at the town gates and ask: "'Damsel, art thou non erytyke ne no Loller?'" To which Kempe replies: "No, serys, I am neythyr erytyke ne Loller" (96). The curt answer satisfies the men. If Kempe is not a "lollard," then what does she stand to gain from being *misrecognized* as one? The answer has to do with the transposable and flexible typology of the "lollard" I discussed in Chapter 3, where I argued that orthodox and heterodox persons alike take up "lollard" typologies as a way of exploring Wycliffism minus the caricatures established by juridical orthodoxy, which at once fears and defines Wycliffites as heretics holding a set of distinct (and predictable) conclusions codified in the persecutions of 1382 at the Blackfriars house in London. The "lollard" typology opened up, among other things, a space within which to articulate alternative and newer models of lay piety that became prominent during the age of Wycliffism. In passus 5 of the C text of *Piers Plowman*, for example, Will "wears" the "lollard" identity as if he were literally trying on clothes – "yclodhed as a lollare" – and he does this as a

way to express his own will and desire to be a provider of spiritual services, performing a legitimate form of spiritual work not accounted for by the labor statutes or ecclesiastical regulations of the late 1380s.

Kempe does something entirely new in her usage and attends to features of “lollard” discourse that we have yet to appreciate. Those features are primarily affective. Unlike Langland and other authors who appropriate the epithet, “lollard,” and then reverse its meaning to designate an ideal, theoretically poor, apostolic lay person, Kempe pursues to the extreme the social and affective significances of the epithet itself, of being mistaken as a bad “lollard.” While this move is reproduced by Wycliffites who refused to be disparaged as “lollards” or heretics, for Kempe alone, *the ideal is the pejorative, the pejorative is the ideal*.

The most immediate connection here is that vociferous crying, which seizes Kempe so often, was by the late fourteenth century thought to be a patent feature of “lollard” heresy, as we see in this example from an orthodox Worcester preacher:<sup>13</sup>

þes lollardes, þay . . . wassche soþylike hir cloþes with-owten with teres of her eȝen. þat miche oþ þe peple is fowle blynded & deseyuyd bi hem. For þei wene þat tei haue plente inow with-in hem oþ þe water of holi leuyng. & truliche it is nobyng so.

...  
fals techers as lollardes & swich oþer þat be now a-daies þat be takyn vor cristen men make an orrible noise & a grews e þis eris o godemen whan þei stond vp & preche þing. (65, 40)

These characterizations of the crying “lollard” emitting an “orrible noise” are quite familiar to Kempe’s narrative: Kempe cries and shouts, and persons as a consequence regard her as a “lollard.” But there are other “lollard” issues at play here. For instance, such “lollard” crying and shouting was taken as a sign of hypocrisy, as understood by another preacher whose sermon is now recorded in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Laud Misc 706: “These cursed heretykes and Lollardys that ben euer cryzyng and grochyng that han wordely goddys and be cursud in alle here weyes and werkys . . . and they han presumyd hem-self to be best worthy to haue domynacion of alle temperal gouernaunce” (fol. 104r). This very vocal “lollardy” bespeaks a semantic condition rather contrary to the faux-etymology from Middle Dutch, too frequently cited in contemporary criticism, of “lollard” as a quiet “mumbler,” sneaking around and praying in corners. In fact, one is hard pressed to find a single solid instance of this sense. I have not seen one. The medieval chronicler Henry Knighton would be equally hard pressed; he is quite explicit about the obstreperous vocality of the “lollards”: “Et sic

quod non poterant recta ratione, quasi pugnanti impetuositate cum uoce clamosa et turbida et altissonis uerbis supplebant [And so what they could not achieve by true reason they sought by aggressive bluster, with clamant voice (uoc clamoso) and pompous high sounding words]."<sup>14</sup> It is "reason" vs. noise. No wonder, then, that Kempe is often taken to be a "lollard," no wonder that her crying is understood by others to be hypocritical, for what often offends is not what she says but how she says it, and how loudly.<sup>15</sup>

Those are the preliminary and most obvious connections. For there is something deeper at work here that moves from such ecstatic displays of interior states that others see as "lollard" to the very subjective conditions that Kempe intends to inhabit and exhibit. What Kempe experiences in being mistaken as a "lollard" is shame, and this affect is, as I shall show, central to the "lollard" typology. Her interest in shame is already an obvious one; from the preface or "Proem" to the very end of the *Book*, Kempe is said to "suffyr mor schame for hys lofe [for Christ's love], as he had hyte hir befor that sche schuld do" (219), and indeed Christ assures her in this regard, "Nay, nay, dowtyr, for that thyng that I lofe best, thei lofe not, and that is schamys, despitys, scornys, and reprevys of the pepil" (302; see also 42). Moreover, the *Book* is careful to show that when persons despise Kempe and accuse her of "lollardy," she in the end advances her own devotional and penitential agenda, as when the Mayor of Leicester says, "for thu art a fals strumpet, a fals Loller, and a fals deceyver of the peple" (229) – to whom she eventually replies: "ye han do al the contrary to me this day, for, syr, ye han cawsyd me myche desquite [shame<sup>16</sup>] for thyng that I am not gilty in" (236).

In every instance, Kempe clears her name of "lollardy" by exposing the inaccuracy and artificiality of the accusation, but she never denies the attendant "shaming," and rather sees affective, political, and salvational advantages to it. This particular move has contemporary parallels in other "lollard" typologies. Wycliffites, authors sympathetic to Wycliffism, and orthodox persons alike understood that to be counted among the "lolleris" is to be among not only the persecuted but among the shamed.<sup>17</sup> As a tract in Cambridge University Library, MS Ii.6.26 shows, an early fifteenth-century Wycliffite admits that "lollardy" confers shame on one's self, but that this is indeed nothing to be ashamed about: "Dere cristen frendis, beþ not aschamed to speke Goddis word and lyue þerafter, for Crist seiþ, 'He þat schameþ me and my wordis bifore men, I schal schame hym before my Fader and his aungelis.'"<sup>18</sup> The Wycliffite author of the *Lanterne of Liȝt* declares that those "Lollaris" who "speken of God" will be shamed and slandered: "Þus han þey [prelati & freris] brouȝt her



malice aboute to sclaunder for Lollardis þat speken of God & dryuen þe peple from þe feiþ.”<sup>19</sup> John Clanvowe, so-called “lollard knight” and friend of Chaucer, offers a related example in his prose tract, the *Two Ways*:<sup>20</sup>

swiche folke þe world scoorneth and hooldeþ hem lolleris and loselis, foolis and schameful wrecches. But, sikerly, God holdeth hem moost wise and most worsshypful, and he wole worsshypen hem in heuene for evere whan þat þoo þat þe world worsshipeþ shuln bee shaamed and pyned for euere in helle. (511–17)

The orthodox author of the *Fyve Wyttes* agrees, citing and then appropriately glossing a relevant scriptural passage, Matthew 18.10, and advising his listeners to resist the temptation to shame or “sclaundre” persons referred to as “lollards”: “*Videte ne scandalizetis unum ex pusillis istis* [See that you scandalize (or shame) not one of these little ones], þough þey be called heretykes or lollardes. Bot be war, consente þou nouȝt to calle hem so ne leue nouȝt lyȝtly to þe commune sclaundre or clamour of fooles, yf þey preche trewely Crist and his gospel.”<sup>21</sup>

Before we take stock of how this discourse of “lollard” shame relates to Kempe’s identity, we can note some of the historical reasons for this affective topic – reasons having to do with the encounters between heterodoxy and orthodoxy, and the reification of identities during the intensification of persecution against Wycliffites themselves, especially by the end of the fourteenth century and the beginning of the fifteenth. The Middle English word, “shame,” has its synonym in Wycliffite texts in the word “sclaundre,” which typically means “slander” but also, as the *MED* has it, “An action or a situation bringing disgrace or shame.”<sup>22</sup> These two terms, therefore, work well together in Wycliffite texts, which are very specific about how ecclesiastical institutions – the consistory courts specifically – are industries of shame. Once a bishop and his clerk(s) had completed a series of legal procedures leading up to the recantation of an individual’s heresies – abjuration did not in all cases presuppose guilt – they would assign penance.<sup>23</sup> If the bishop did not have the penitent flogged or imprisoned for a length of time, he would order the person in question to lead a parish procession in the appropriate penitential garb with head, feet, and shins bare – this, to maximize bodily exposure and the sense of shame – carrying a faggot on the shoulders and then continue bearing it for the duration of whatever ceremony, such as an open-air sermon against the individual’s own heresies.<sup>24</sup> The successful completion of such penances were often certified by a clerk,<sup>25</sup> and there were cases where a penitent would be considered a relapse if the penances were not fully performed.<sup>26</sup> But once some persons completed their penance,

they had to brook a variety of "perpetual penances." Former heretics were frequently mandated to wear badges of shame in public – to wear "without any concealment for the rest of their lives" a badge in the likeness of a burning faggot or a bundle of faggots.<sup>27</sup> Another common "perpetual penance" was to restrict penitents' travels for their entire lifetime, so that presumably they could be monitored and their area of influence diminished in the event they relapse.<sup>28</sup> The heresies of former heretics are rarely forgotten, and the apparatus of parish and diocesan orthodoxy assured that the local public always remembered who was once a heretic.<sup>29</sup>

It is easy to see, finally, how this institutional shaming is germane to the Wycliffite experience and imaginary. Wycliffites often take up the legal meaning of "defamed" from the Latin *infamatur* and link it with "sclaundre" to produce a vernacular version of the traditional "infamia canonica" and "infamia facti."<sup>30</sup> The usual Latin form of *infamatur* appears frequently in reference to Wycliffite heretics – from the publications making "infamous" Wyclif's disciples in the early 1380s<sup>31</sup> to the series of persecutions witnessed in Bishop Alnwick's court book from the diocese of Norwich, recording multiple interrogations between 1428 and 1431, some of which instance the discourse of defamation: "In the name of God, tofore you, the worshipful fadir in Crist, William, be the grace of God bisshop of Norwich, Y, John Skylly of Flixton, miller, of your diocese, your subject, defamed and noted hugely of heresie, felyng and undirstandyng that afore this tyme Y afermed opin errors and heresies."<sup>32</sup> In reference to these legal characterizations, the Wycliffites use "shame" and "sclaundre" as vernacular synonyms for persecution and defamation, but they reverse the defamation back at the ecclesiastical institutions themselves, never allowing the passive indicative of "infamatur" to conceal the mechanisms and procedures that actively shame them.<sup>33</sup> The Wycliffites especially decry the church's use of censure and excommunication, its slandering of Wycliffite theology, its despising of parishioners, of the saints, and of the order of priesthood itself, among other things.<sup>34</sup> Especially resonant are the observations that prelates "sclaundre" persons for teaching "goddis lawe": "zif a trewe man displese a worldly prelat for techynge & meyntenynge of goddis lawe, he schal be sclaundrid for a cursed man & forboden to teche cristis gospel."<sup>35</sup> The Wycliffites view the church, and most of its practices, as so shameful that a prelate's own purported heresies become "gospel."<sup>36</sup> The urgency of such Wycliffite points is communicated in the utter frequency of the term "sclaundre" in commentaries on the hypocrisy of prelates: "for þat þing þat is verrey

sclaundre þei [prelates] clepen & rekenen as no sclaundre, & þat þing þat is no sclaundre but remedie þer azenst þei crien & clepen sclaundre; but alle þis is for þei wolden dwelle stille in robbyng of þe peple & here cursed lustis & sclaundre, & disceyue cristen men in good techynge and ensauple of holy lif.”<sup>37</sup> So, in a word: according to the Wycliffites, orthodox persons – be they prelates or friars or both – intend to shame and defame them by calling them “lollards” and heretics, and Wycliffites shame these persons in turn for doing so. Linguistically and historically speaking, then, post-Wycliffite England witnesses a very institutionally specific discourse of shame and of “lollard” shame. This discourse, I will now show, informs Kempe’s *Book*.

#### “LOLLARDY” AS MYSTICISM

But why would Kempe want to draw from this discourse and not from the discussions of shame that appear earlier in the mystical tradition? Can we be certain that “lollardy” really offers Kempe such colorful, affective, and presentist opportunities? We can be, if we heed how Kempe handles her mystical predecessors and subsumes “lollard” affectivity into her own mysticism. If we bear in mind the most basic features of the *Book* – that Kempe inserts herself into the world of shame by confronting her social superiors and by, essentially, speaking out of place – it becomes evident that she is doing something different from the tradition of anchoritic literature and counsel. For instance, of all the bits of advice that can be found in such works as Walter Hilton’s *Scale of Perfection*, which she knew as “Hylton’s boke” (115), she seems especially to enact a passage concerning the correction of others – specifically, that passage’s loophole: “to thee or to ony othir which hath the staat and the purpos of lif contemplatif it fallith not for to leve the kepyng of youresilf and underneme othir men of here defautis, but it were in wel greet nede, that a man schulde perische but yif he undernemyd hym.”<sup>38</sup> Moreover, she does not entirely follow the more phenomenological or “interiorizing” works such as the *Cloud of Unknowing*, in which the world and its shames are bracketed in a movement towards stillness and nothingness. Even five of Kempe’s most relevant precursors – Christina of Markyate, Angela of Filigno, Marguerite Porete, Bridget of Sweden, and Julian of Norwich – evince a movement away from shame and the social world, rather than toward it, in their spiritual ascent to perfection, revelation, and enclosure.<sup>39</sup> Moreover, Kempe’s models of shame are not Richard Rolle’s, as Rolle also figures shame as an affect to eschew.<sup>40</sup> The life of Mary of Oignies is,

I think, the best parallel to Kempe's endeavor to pursue shame, but the key difference, and one that reflects the differing historical moments of each, is that Mary does not ever get mistaken as a heretic.<sup>41</sup> Kempe, moreover, declares her filiation with Mary (292) and with Elizabeth of Hungary (296) by way of inspired sobbing, and not shaming. Indeed, we have to take seriously how Kempe relates herself to her mystical predecessors, for she does so in rather pointed ways, as when she says that "sche herd nevyr boke, neythyr Hilton's boke, ne Bridis book, ne Stimulus Amoris, ne Incendium Amoris, ne non other that evyr sche herd redyn, that spake so hyly of lofe of God but that sche felt as hyly in werkynge in hir sowle" (115; see also 280, 292, 94–96).<sup>42</sup> She is not ignoring these examples – how could she? – so much as exceeding and bettering them, a strategy that parallels her intent to surpass the material confines of the reclusive life – the cell. If works such as the *Ancrene Wisse* dictate that those who suffer like Christ "neauer ne beoð gleade iheortet bute hwen ha þolieð sum wa oðer sum scheome wið Iesu on his rode," Kempe performs such principles in public, expressing her joyful shames through the typology of the "lollard," as we will now see.<sup>43</sup> And that Kempe refuses enclosure, and that an elder monk wishes her to be "closyd in an hows of ston" (93) right when she is suspected to be "lollard," is further emblematic of Kempe's choice to reconfigure this literary history in view of contemporary figurations and affective forms.<sup>44</sup>

And so we now finally turn to Kempe's project of assuming the affects and dispositions so evident in "lollard" typologies – those of the shamed believer – and of adapting what is genuinely a Wycliffite strategy that goes under the banner of "lollardy," the strategy of fighting shame with shame.<sup>45</sup> An excellent example of this borrowing comes in Chapter 52, which continues an account of Kempe's experiences in York, and which is the most commentated upon trial in her *Book*. It commences: "Ther was a monke schuld prechyn in Yorke, the which had herd meche slawdyr and meche evyl langage of the sayd creatur" (247)<sup>46</sup> – verifying that Kempe's experience in York has already been rigged, as it were: for the terms of shame, slander, and evil "language" are already in place and ready to simplify and condemn her identity. And so this monk preaches against her, and Kempe welcomes this treatment, assuring the monk himself that his spiteful sermon made her "mery and glad in my sowle that I may anythyng suffyr for hys lofe" (247). She then proceeds to the Archbishop of York, where the problems of slander and shame are amplified, taking Kempe's companions as collateral targets. A supposedly "good clerke" in the archbishop's household says to the husband and wife who were

ushering Kempe to the archbishop, “Sir, why have ye and yowr wife browt this woman hedyr? Sche schal stelyn away fro yow, and than schal ye han a velany of hir” (248). This cleric is predicting that “velany” (a synonym for “shame”<sup>47</sup>) will be conferred on this party when Kempe insufficiently answers for herself. Indeed, the next day, Kempe lands right in the seat of shame – an inquisition into her possible heresy:

ther comyn many of the Erchebischopys meny, *despisyng hir*, callyng hir “Loller” and “heretyke”, and sworyn many an horrybyl othe that sche shulde be brent. And sche, thorw the strength of Jhesu, seyde ayen to hem: “Serys, I drede me ye schul be brent in helle wythowtyn ende, les than ye amende yow of yowr othys sweryng, for ye kepe not the comawndementys of God. I wolde not sweryn as ye don for al the good of this worlde.” (248, my emphasis)

What’s key here is not only that she objects to swearing, which is a common (though not exclusively) Wycliffite position (see Chapter 4, 76); rather, it is that, in the appropriate “lollard” fashion, she reverses the direction of this despising and shaming.<sup>48</sup> For immediately after her declaration that the accusers in the archbishop’s household “kepe not the comawndementys of God,” they dissipate in shame: “Than thei yedyn away as thei had be aschamyd” (248). This is not the end, however. For the archbishop pursues a sinister initiative by calling back the crowd of accusers – “he comawndyd hys mene to fettyn a peyr of feterys and seyde sche schulde be feteryd, for sche was a fals heretyke” (249) – but this threatening situation is again met with a striking reversal of shame and slander.

We can appreciate this reversal accordingly. Kempe is made to answer questions on the articles of faith, but her answers, although satisfactory to the clerks – “We knowyn wel that sche can the articles of the feith” (250) – are not convincing. For the clerks suspect that her recitation of the current orthodox doctrine is done strictly by rote and, as such, masks the doctrinal perversions she broadcasts publicly: as the clerks put it, “for the pepil hath gret feyth in hir dalyawnce, and peraventur sche myth pervertyn summe of them” (*ibid.*). Of course, forgotten here is the irony that such rote citation can be the best evidence of belief in orthodoxy, but in traditional consistory practice, it never convinces the bishop and his clerks if there happens to be additional knowledge in the form of depositions from neighbors that report on a suspect’s heresies.<sup>49</sup> Indeed, Kempe here is illustrating the dangers of such reporting (which she regards as slander) and its potency when uttered by clerks convinced by witnesses. And it is precisely at this point where the social problem of slander against Kempe is manifest that she reverses the charges and

changes the direction of the shaming. The archbishop, in seeking to mount a case against Kempe by referring to rumors about her identity, avers, "I am evyl enformyd of the; I her seyn thu art a ryth wikked woman" (*ibid.*), and Kempe retorts: "Ser, so I her seyn that ye arn a wikkyd man. And yyf ye been as wikkyd as men seyn, ye schal nevyr come in hevyn, les than ye amende yow whil ye ben here" (*ibid.*). Again, Kempe engages in the typical "lollard" reversal of charges, questioning the detractors' own salvation. She also draws the archbishop himself into the circuit of shame and slander, and he is quite taken aback, shocked that public opinion could be so against him: "Than seyde he ful boistowsly: 'Why, thow . . . ! What sey men of me?' Sche answeryd: 'Other men, syr, can telle yow wel anow.'" It is an appropriate dissident strategy to stump the inquisitor by exposing his own faults in the presence of others, and it is a strategy that is characteristically Wycliffite in its reversal of shame.

This scene in York is representative of nearly all of the scenes in which Kempe is accused of "lollardy." That is, most of Kempe's reports about those accusations of "lollardy" fall within the parameters of slander, shame, and hearsay of sometimes exaggerated proportions, such as "thu are holdyn the grettest Loller in al this cuntre, er abowte London eythyr" (258).<sup>50</sup> Even the charge that she is "Combomis dowtyr" (262) – daughter of Sir John Oldcastle, the proclaimed leader of a "lollard rebellion" in 1414 whom we discussed in Chapter 5 – is strikingly effective in its ballooning of the discourse of slander, with the implication being that the entire Lancastrian apparatus of publicity and propaganda, the very mechanisms that saw to Oldcastle's condemnation and execution, is poised and ready to defame Kempe herself.<sup>51</sup>

But how do the happenings in the consistory court, as well as the aforementioned public polemic, relate to Kempe's religiosity? We are now asking a question about how "lollard" shame is a necessary feature of Kempe's affective piety that renders the *Book* itself as inevitably post-Wycliffite – interested in more than just off-the-cuff statements about "lollards." To appreciate this point, we must look at the first episode of Kempe's "lollard" persecution, as detailed in Chapter 13. The scene is in Canterbury and begins with Kempe being "gretly despyed and repreyd for cawse she wept so fast, bothyn of the monkys and prestys, and of seculer men, ner al a day"; the shamings cause her husband to abandon her "as he had not a knowyn hir." Then, an "eld monk," seeking perhaps to inquire into the ruckus, takes Kempe by the hand and asks, "What kanst thow seyn of God?" Kempe then tells "the monk a story of scriptur" (93), but the monk, who is likely John Kynnton, "formerly chancellor to

Queen Joanna, consort of Henry IV,<sup>52</sup> wishes only that she were “closyd in an hows of ston, that ther schuld no man speke wyth the” (93). Clearly, Kempe’s orthodoxy is not in concert with this monk’s own idea of religious correctness. Nonetheless she entreats to “tellyn yow,” this monk, “a tale” (94) about a man who hires other men “to chyde” him “for remyssyon” of his “synne” (95), and who always welcomes the day when he is insulted without ever having to spend a penny on an insulter-for-hire. Kempe’s point to the monk is obvious, of course: her day in Canterbury is one such day, for “why! I was at hom in myn owyn contre . . . I sorwyd for I had no schame, skorne, and despyt as I was worthy” (95). It is here that events come to a head. As if in response to this goad to shame her even further, a crowd follows her out of the monastery voicing their suspicions that she is a “lollard”: “Thow schalt be brent, fals Lollare! Her is a cartful of thornys redy for the, and a tonne to bren the wyth!” (95). Trembling, Kempe prays, “Hedyr cam I, Lord, for thi lofe. Blessyd Lord, help me and have mercy on me” (96); the prayer is answered by the arrival of “tweyn fayr yong men,” who ask her simply, “Damsel, art thou non erylke ne no Loller?” To which Kempe replies, “No, serys, I am neyther erylke ne Loller” (95). And at that proclamation, the men escort her to a hostel to be reunited with her husband.

That is a précis of the scene, which clearly enough evinces Kempe’s desideratum to be shamed in a “lollard” fashion. But there is more here. This episode also demonstrates the necessity of “lollardy” to clarify the terms of mystical disclosure. Readers of the *Book* may be familiar with its habit of expressing, retrospectively, the spiritual significance of various episodes by citing the terms of Pauline allegoresis, “flesh” and “spirit” or “bodily” and “ghostly”: “For sumtyme that sche undirstod bodily, it was to ben undirstondyn gostly” (384). There is no better example of this interpretive move than in the transition from Chapter 13 – the Canterbury chapter – to Chapter 14, where Kempe waxes in hindsight about the “solace and comfort” she received from her recent “lollard” torments:

Than thys creatur thowt it was ful mery to be repreyd for Goddys lofe; and it was to hir gret *solas* and *counfort* whan sche was chedyn and fletyn for the lofe of Jhesu for repreyng of synne, for spekyng of vertu, for comownyng in scriptur wech sche lernyd in sermownys and be comownyng wyth clerkys. (97–98, my emphasis)

This is an interior turn – “thys creatur thowt” – whereby “shame” is translated into its opposite, “comfort.” It is also a validation of the practices that get Kempe into trouble – “for repreyng of synne, for spekyng of vertu,



for comownyng in scriptur" – leaving behind the "lollard" label that is always affixed to those specific activities: Kempe will pursue them even if others regard them as "lollard," but she will preserve the lesson of being persecuted as a "lollard," translating the shame into comfort. She well understands that "lollardy" is a construct to be superseded once it has served its purpose of defining her affective strategies and reversals. The *Book* replays this kind of supersession several times.

As Kempe continues in this reflection – "Sche ymagyned in hirself" – she translates the previous "lollard" tribulations in Canterbury into a reflection on her possible martyrdom:

Sche ymagyned in hirself what deth sche mygth deyn for Crystys sake. Hyr thowt sche wold a be slayn for Goddys lofe, but dred for the poynt of deth, and therfor sche ymagyned hyrself the most soft deth, as hir thowt, for dred of inpacyens, that was to be bowndyn hyr hed and hir fet to a stoke, and her hed to be smet of with a scharp ex, for Goddys lofe. Than seyde owyr Lord in hir mende: "I thank the, dowtyr, that thou woldyst suffer deth for my lofe . . ." (98)

While Kempe unmoors "lollardy" from the habits of speaking scripture and reproving sinful persons, she is, again, preserving the affective surplus of those experiences in which others mistook her for a "lollard" by maintaining a sense of the persecuted self and including "lollard" affectivity in her autohagiography.<sup>53</sup> This sort of accommodation is important for us to consider as we remember that *all* the episodes in which others threaten her life involve accusations of "lollardy" (cf. 336, 365, 378). Yet what bothers Kempe most is not where her beliefs may overlap with Wycliffism, or with orthodox caricatures thereof, but rather with the ethical commitment to this typology, and the limits of that commitment to live and ultimately die as a martyr or as a "lollard" martyr. When she wishes for a "most soft deth" – by which she means a quick and clean decapitation in the manner of many female saints – she does not want the specific threat in Canterbury to be literally realized, a slow death by burning in a barrel – "a tonne to bren the wyth!" – precisely the fate the "lollard" heretic John Badby met in 1410. We might read this distinction as Kempe's refusal to be put to death in the manner of heretics.<sup>54</sup> Kempe will not die for "lollardy," nor would she condone the execution of heretics. Indeed, her preference is to pray for heretics and extend them mercy: "Sumtyme sche wept another ower . . . for Jewys, Sarazynys, and alle fals heretikys, that God for his gret goodnes schulde puttyn away her blyndnes, that they myth thorw hys grace be turnyd to the feyth of Holy Chirche and ben children of salvacyon."<sup>55</sup> It seems, however, that the real problem is death itself, the cessation of the life of tribulation, "lollard" or otherwise. For later on in the *Book*, Christ



admonishes Kempe to stop imagining the extremes of a martyr's death – the question of what sort of death would be preferable over another – and instead to go out in the world and embrace shame: “Dowtyr, it is more plesyng unto me that thu suffyr despitys and scornys, schamys and reprevys, wrongys and disesys, than yif thin hed wer smet of thre tymes on the day, every day in seyn yer” (261).<sup>56</sup> And with Christ's assertion comes the reinstatement of Kempe's identification with “lollard” shame: immediately after this instruction, Kempe is called “Combomis dowtyr” or “Oldcastle's daughter” and threatened once more with burning – to “be brent at Lynne” (262). This “lollard” tribulation, then, is a necessity of the text and a defining feature of what it means for Kempe to be in the world, to face its risks, to subsume contemporary social issues into her mysticism, and to avail herself of prevailing affective forms unseen before the age of Wycliffism.

“Shame is by nature recognition,” Sartre says. It is a useful point that allows us to see that shame allows Kempe to strike an affective affinity with Wycliffism – to recognize it. An analogy will express the necessity of this affinity: Kempe is to “lollardy” as Wycliffites are to mysticism. That is, in the same way that “lollard” affectivity informs Kempe's sense of devotional self, so too are Wycliffites drawn to the affective or mystical tradition in which Kempe conscientiously participates, specifically to the works of Richard Rolle, the vocabularies of which seem to infuse Kempe's *Book*, such as the incessant imperative to embody and practice a “perfitte luf” of God (a key locution to which we shall return below).<sup>57</sup> Again, in this connection it is important to bear in mind how Kempe negotiates the demands of a mysticism such as Rolle's, for she tellingly reverses aspects of Rolle's emphases: rather than asserting that shame, pain, persecution, and tribulation are the impediments to “perfitte luf,”<sup>58</sup> they are, for Kempe, the preconditions. And in this respect, Kempe not only demonstrates her affective affinity with Wycliffite models of “lollard” identity, but reveals that, in many respects, she turns to Rolle for some of the same reasons the Wycliffites do.

Wycliffites, having a significant interest in the affective register and, specifically, in the penitential sense of self, adapt Rolle's Psalter commentaries and render them as “Wycliffite Psalters.” These texts survive in eleven manuscripts and highlight how affective political, anticlerical criticism can be – typically, against the friars and prelates.<sup>59</sup> We can also take stock of manuscripts that contain both Rolle's works and Wycliffite (and other reformist) materials such as the large Wycliffite sermon cycle, indicating that there are early fifteenth-century readers

who found enough commonality between these works to compile them together.<sup>60</sup> Wycliffites also adapt other works in the mystical tradition such as the *Ancrene Wisse*.<sup>61</sup> The affective affinity between Kempe and the Wycliffites is emblematic of the readiness with which persons, even in the fifteenth century, can overcome the binaries of heterodoxy and orthodoxy, often doing so in pursuit of affective agendas that Kempe pursues as well.

#### THE RETURN OF THE RECANTED

This section now broadens our view of the affective register by linking the question of shame to the identity of the recanted heretic – an identity that is disclosed through penance and the mandated routines of public- and self-shaming but also expressed in certain kinds of public polemic. If orthodox preachers, theologians, prelates, and chroniclers nervously and sometimes angrily took stock of the perceptible increase in "lollard" heretics from the late fourteenth century into the fifteenth century, they are remarkably silent about the return of "lollards," once recanted and reformed, into the church. This is a curious omission in view of the greater number of persons in the fifteenth century being accused of "lollard" heresy, recanting, and returning to the church. It is also surprising in light of the fact that by the fifteenth century bishops themselves were familiar with anti-heresy protocols, which were formalized for the extracting of confessions, the recording of recantations, and the assigning of penances.<sup>62</sup>

Why were not persons speaking about the return of heretics? The answer lies in the ways in which anti-Wycliffite discourse was partitioned in late medieval England. One kind of discourse belonged chiefly to episcopal administration and town life: records of recanted heretics were kept in the consistory courtbooks; neighborly relations, moreover, preserved one's former heresies within communal, local memory. Yet another kind of discourse belonged to schoolmen, chroniclers, preachers, and poets; theirs was more overtly polemical than practical, keeping the identity of the recanted below the discursive surface for reasons that are themselves ideological: were orthodox polemicists, such as William Woodford or Thomas Netter, to complain about, much less identify, the number of recanted persons within the orthodox population, they would risk critiquing the very concept of orthodoxy they wish to sustain: to conceptualize that a former heretic is genuinely a member of the orthodox church is to acknowledge that the church itself subsumes or contains (in the literal sense) the elements of dissent – a movement opposite of that involving the genesis of heresy, understood to be a self-willed departure to the outside of the

church and received Christian teaching. What is distinctly “fifteenth-century” about this sort of orthodoxy, in other words, is that it is faced with a new form of self-recognition, an awareness that heresy comes from within.

The particular question I will address, then, concerns orthodoxy as a concept: What happens to English orthodoxy when the discourse about former heretics *becomes* the discourse of public polemic, when the identity of the recanted heretic makes its sudden appearance on the cultural stage and is in turn subject to scrutiny and contestation? How might the fusion of the discourses of ecclesiastical administration and public polemic interest Kempe?

There is no better example of this discursive convergence than in the public discussions of Philip Repingdon, one of England’s most influential, orthodox persons who, interestingly enough, first gained national prominence as a religious dissident in the early 1380s when he was a follower of John Wyclif. At that time, Repingdon’s name appeared, with that of his colleague, Nicholas Hereford, wherever broadsides were posted, *sedulae* or “schedules” circulated, and mandates by Archbishop William Courtenay were pronounced publicly and then posted on a number of prestigious doors and well-traveled avenues. In fact, very early on in the heretication of Wycliffism, the archbishop had identified Repingdon along with Hereford as the two most notorious disciples of Wyclif: from that 1382 mandate which names Repingdon as one of the Wycliffites<sup>63</sup> to the publications relating to his and his colleague’s final condemnation for heresy,<sup>64</sup> to that very “protestation” that Repingdon and Hereford are said to have authored and nailed to doors of St. Paul’s and St. Mary’s church in London.<sup>65</sup>

But no sooner does Repingdon recant in 1382, regaining favor with the church hierarchy, eventually rising to bishop in 1405, than he effectively disappears from specific kinds of public discourse (mandates, chronicles, sermons) that take up, however tangentially, England’s own recent past troubled by the presence of heretics. Instances of this erasure of Repingdon, and his own Wycliffite past, are telling.<sup>66</sup> For example, Bishop Henry Wakefield of Worcester, whom we encountered in Chapter 2, issued his anti-Wycliffite mandate against the “Lollardorum confederati” comprised of a group of the important, early Wycliffites – Hereford, John Aston, John Purvey, John Parker, and William Swynderby.<sup>67</sup> Absent, notably, is Repingdon. Why is Hereford mentioned, since he was already stifled in prison, January 1387?<sup>68</sup> And, more pressingly, why are Aston and Swynderby included, since they had already abjured?<sup>69</sup> Of course, it does not matter who in particular abjured, since, as I argued in Chapter 2, this

mandate established a backformation of the "lollard" type and set it in the past. The point in Repingdon's exclusion in this document is both to disassociate him from the collective of heretics and, perhaps more importantly, to remove him altogether from the primal scene of heresy, the invention of "lollard" heresy. A similar strategy is instanced in other legal materials pertaining to the realm and dissident writings. Parliament had, in 1382, issued a mandate to the Chancellor of Oxford, Robert Rygge, ordering him to investigate heresies among those schoolmen who favored the opinions of Wyclif such as "Philippum Repyngdone" and exhorting him to seek out the heretical books of Wyclif and Hereford.<sup>70</sup> Parliament repeated this legislation, effectively, in 1388 – this time with a curious but expected omission: the "Comission regis contra libros Lollardorum" names Wyclif, Hereford, Aston, "et suorum sequacium," as authors or owners of illicit books, with no mention of Repingdon.<sup>71</sup>

There are more examples of this peculiar sort of handling of Repingdon's identity. A contemporary sermon preached in Worcester against "lollard" depravities refers predictably elliptically to Repingdon, mentioning that the individual in question was a "lollard" but has since returned to the belief of "oper good cristenmen": "For þer was a lollard at Oxfanfort but awhile agon þat forsuk al his errours & al his misleuyng & turnyd azen to þe leuyng of oper good cristenmen, & tan a told certeyn rytes & doying of hem, 3e, so cursed & so oreble to her."<sup>72</sup> To identify Repingdon in this case would be to remind others of the errors of his past, errors brought to life by his knowledge of "lollard" rites. The implication here is that Repingdon knows heresy better than most, explaining why, paradoxically, Repingdon's name is continually bracketed from his potential knowledge of errors and heresies.<sup>73</sup> Indeed we might assume that Repingdon may have briefed the chronicler Henry Knighton on Wycliffite beliefs and practices.<sup>74</sup> Yet when Knighton narrates those aspects of Wycliffite history that involve Repingdon, he suppresses his identity: when, for instance, he introduces the "Confessio sectatorum Magistri Johannis Wyclif in suis opinionibus," he removes Repingdon's name – saying merely, "Nichol of Herforde and my felowe pristus."<sup>75</sup> Knighton probably realized that the document itself not only incriminated Repingdon but located him both within a "lollard" history that was already under erasure (as it applied to him) and, moreover, imputed to him a subversive, textual authority that should be forgotten.<sup>76</sup> Repingdon cannot even be shown to confess his heresies, because in the real time of reading such a document, it brings his heresies back to public attention.

If it were not apparent already, these discussions about Repingdon have less to do with the “real” Repingdon and more to do with an impossible Repingdon, an identity that cannot be fully comprehended within the normative discourses of orthodox publicity and propaganda. Otherwise, persons might have to account for why a former Wycliffite administers one of the most prestigious dioceses in England – a bishop who was “amazingly lenient” in his procedures against Wycliffite heretics, a man who was a quiet reformer in his *Sermones Dominicales*.<sup>77</sup> But to think through those implications is, for the most strident of anti-Wycliffites, to either accept a model of orthodoxy that allows for gray areas whereby one can indeed be “amazingly lenient” towards heretics or, as is most likely the case, it is to veer imprudently into heterodoxy.

Such territories are revealing, too. While Knighton fails to identify Repingdon in the so-called “Confessio,” the compiler of Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 647, which also contains this item, does not.<sup>78</sup> Why this “Confession” (or “protestation”), which amounts to a statement of a new-found, sacramental orthodoxy on the parts of Hereford and Repingdon, would interest a compiler of obviously unorthodox proclivities, at the very least, is initially a bit hard to fathom, as is the rationale for why such a text would reside well with *bona fide* Wycliffite texts, or texts amenable to Wycliffism, such as a sermon by Grosseteste (fols. 68v–69r) and a tract known as “Against the Friars” (fols. 86v–107v), among other things. The answer is easier to find, however, if we view this document in the post-Wycliffite context: this “protestation” of Hereford and Repingdon stands as propaganda against both men as turncoats.<sup>79</sup> It is a memorial, in other words – a “record” documenting their turning away from Wycliffism and towards the corruptions of orthodoxy.

The Wycliffite William Thorpe, likewise, draws attention to Repingdon’s unfortunate rejection of Wyclif’s teachings by reflecting on the bishop’s “present doyng,” a phrase Thorpe uses to indicate how Repingdon and other Wycliffites fouled themselves with “sclaundre” when they revoked Wycliffism.<sup>80</sup> Thorpe is rather ingenious in articulating the problem of Repingdon for present-day orthodoxy – so ingenious, in fact, that he challenges the very head of English orthodoxy, Archbishop Arundel, to explain the Wycliffite past of Repingdon, one of the church’s leading members:

Filip of Repintoun, þat was first chanoun and aftirwarde abbot of Leycetre, which is now bischop of Lyncolne, I telle to þee þat þe dai is comen for þe which he fastide þe euen, for he neiþer holdiþ now, neiþir wole holde, þe loore þat he tauȝte whanne he was no but chanoun of Leycetre, for noo bischop of þis londe pursueþ now scharplier hem þat holden þat wei þan he doiþ.<sup>81</sup>

To paraphrase the above, Thorpe has Arundel admit the inadmissible: "Repington does not hold now nor ever will hold the teachings he professed in his days as a canon, for there is no bishop better able than he to persecute 'lollards'." Thorpe imagines, in other words, that the orthodox defense of Repington verifies the Wycliffite critique of the same man: both parties can agree that Repington pursues Wycliffites harshly. Of course, Thorpe is not the only Wycliffite who holds this critical view of Repington.<sup>82</sup> And he is not the only author on the margins of late medieval religion to pose the problem of Repington to orthodoxy itself. There is Kempe, too.

#### THE MYSTIC AND THE BISHOP — PHILIP REPINGTON

We have seen how the orthodox discourse of heresy evinces a series of absences around the identities of former heretics, especially Repington. But the one stands for the many in this case, for the figure (*figura*) of Repington is freighted with meaning: for orthodox persons, it symbolizes an inability to conceptualize in collective terms the fact, let alone significance, of so many heretics being detected and then reincorporated back into the church. For her part, Kempe views this inability as shameful and limited and, as a consequence, seeks to accommodate the identity of the recanted in her own shameful religiosity, which already expresses an identity that only seems paradoxical ("divine or demonic"?) from the rigid perspectives of hyper-orthodoxy. And what of the other perspectives? It is interesting to note that Kempe never runs into any "lollards" to see what they think of her identity, but the omission is certainly not odd since, as we have seen, Kempe thinks of "lollardy" foremost as a typology, as one should. Then again, her encounter with Repington may well provide the needed alternative to ultra-orthodoxy, the needed perspective of difference itself.

Even a superficial attention to the particulars of Kempe's *Book* shows the mystic's interest in Repington to be explicit and curious. Kempe alludes to him in the Proem (as I shall argue below), then again in Chapter 11 when she speaks with her husband about her wish to take a vow of chastity ("I pray yow, suffer me to make a vow of chastyte in what bysshopys hand that God wele" [87]), then in Chapter 15, where she records her three encounters with the bishop over three days, then again in Chapter 48, where the Mayor of Leicester demands "gon to my Lord of Lynkoln for a lettyr, in-as-meche as thu art in hys jurisdiccyon" (237), and again in Chapter 49, where "Than sche gat hir a lettyr of the Abbot to my

Lord of Lyncolne, into record in what conversacyon sche had ben the tyme that sche was in Leicetyr" (238). Perhaps indeed all of Kempe's encounters with Repingdon are a topographical matter, a matter of "jurisdiccyon" as she wanders in and out of his diocese – the largest diocese in the country.<sup>83</sup> Yet that Kempe even cites the name of Repingdon means that she is drawing from a topic in late medieval discourse, a discourse of orthodox identity far richer than we have hitherto recognized, and one that is, as we shall see, bound up with specific affective investments – shame.<sup>84</sup>

Kempe reports her first visit with Repingdon in Chapter 15 after having traveled around England with her husband and others to collect money for her forthcoming pilgrimage to European shrines. Perhaps the greatest irony here is that Kempe, who wants to make herself visible in a very public way by wearing white and speaking her visions to all and sundry, approaches the very person whose visibly invisible persona was an utterly public problem itself: "And at this tyme he [her husband] led hir to spekyn wyth the Bysshop of Lynkoln, which hyght Philyp" (104). Kempe's primary aim in this visit is to have Repingdon approve her wearing of the white mantle that had so shamed her already – in keeping with her willingness to be, even if momentarily, shamed as a "lollard." It is in this context that we can appreciate once more Kempe's imperatives as discussed in the previous section: Kempe is asking Repingdon to endorse her life of public shame – not asking, but gently demanding: "My lord, yf it lyke yow, I am comawndyd in my sowle that ye schal yve me the mantyl and the ryng, and clothyn me al in whygth clothys" (106). And so it follows that she is, in essence, asking him to endorse her life of "lollard" shame, as recorded in numerous places in the *Book*, where shame, the white clothes, and "lollardy" are all interrelated, as when the Mayor of Leicester calls Kempe a "fals Loller" (229). Kempe tells this mayor: "syr, ye han cawsyd me myche despyte [shame] for thyng that I am not gilty in" (236), and he replies determinedly, "I wil wetyn why thow gost in white clothys, for I trowe thow art comyn hedyr to han away owr wyvys fro us and ledyn hem wyth the" (236).<sup>85</sup> Additionally, it is in York that the archbishop, upon hearing his household condemn Kempe as a "'Loller' and 'heretyke'" (248), asks, "Why goes thu in white?" and then declares her to be "a fals heretyke" (249). The following narration from Chapter 44 sums up the general situation: "sche was howselyd al in white, and sithen hath sche sufferyd meche despyte and meche schame in many dyvers cuntreys, cyteys, and townys, thankyd be God of alle . . . Than suffryd sche schamys and reprevys for weryng of hir white clothys" (218–19).



Because it is Kempe's wish to "suffer meche despyte and meche schame" for wearing her white clothes, Repingdon on second thought, and on the advice of his clerks who presumably know about her through defamation, refuses her request to grant her the white mantle, and for this refusal Kempe is instructed by Christ to give Repingdon the following admonishment: "Dowtyr, sey the Bysshop that he dredyth mor the schamys of the world than the parfyt lofe of God" (108). This is an important moment in the *Book* that, through the phrase, "schamys of the world," communicates a specific social logic in which Repingdon himself is implicated, and it indicates to us that this topical reference to the bishop is in fact part of a larger cultural conversation about his status as a former Wycliffite. Above all, it is crucial that Christ speaks this admonishment to Kempe, for whenever he does speak in the *Book*, he frequently verbalizes socio-symbolic problems, the foibles and sins of persons, especially clerks and ecclesiastical dignitaries.<sup>86</sup> For instance, here is how in Kempe's *Book* Christ exposes the sins and social abuses of a monk in Chapter 12 – "My dereworthy dowtyr, sey in the name of Jhesu that he hath synned in letthery [lechery], in dyspeyr, and in wordly goodys keypyng"; "Charge hym that he forsake hys synne and be schreve therof" (91). And here is how Christ offers advice about whether a particular vicar should surrender his benefice, "Crist seyde unto hir spyrite: 'Bydde the vykary kepyn styлле hys cure and hys benefyce and don hys diligence in prechyng and techyng . . .'" (139).<sup>87</sup> Through his supra-sensible, supra-symbolic form of knowing, Christ presents the social "totality" of which Kempe herself, whose character is embedded in the present of the narrative, can only be partially aware, but is nonetheless obligated to report: Christ's imperative to Kempe is always to speak and "sey," to predict events and outcomes, to discern all "that is wrowt in the world" (302), and to identify social truths. If Christ's imperatives, which Kempe continually delivers to persons she encounters, are the voice of the symbolic itself – the discursive social whole – then it so follows that what Christ says about Repingdon is a metacommentary attuned to the particulars of the socially symbolic Repingdon: she presents the larger discursive conditions within which her own interpretation or version of Repingdon exists – a Repingdon for whom shame is at stake: "he dredyth mor the schamys of the world than the parfyt lofe of God."<sup>88</sup> Her Repingdon is not strictly a biographical item, in other words, and cannot only be treated as such. It is a social form.

But there is more at stake than sociality. Indeed, Kempe moves beyond the methods of her contemporaries in simply pointing out that Repingdon



had a Wycliffite past.<sup>89</sup> When in her *Book* Christ explains that Repingdon “dredyth mor the schamys of the world than the parfyt lofe of God,” there also arises a moral and ethical demand on him to “perfectly love God” in view of the public shame that accrues to his particular social identity. The demand on Repingdon is to escape this bind between reified positions of orthodoxy and heterodoxy by modeling himself after Kempe, who lives precisely in the mode of shameful love, as Christ pithily utters it elsewhere in the *Book*:

Nay, nay, dowtyr, for that thyng that I lofe best, thei lofe not, and that is schamys, despitys, scornys, and reprevys of the pepil, and therfor schal thei not have this grace. For, dowtyr, I telle the, *he that dredith the schamys of the world may not parfytely lovyn God.* (302, my emphasis)

If we follow the consequences of this assertion, and bear in mind that this sort of loving but shameful devotional imperative is often realized in Kempe’s being mistaken as a “lollard” and, in turn, is one which she foists onto Repingdon, then this bishop appears here as a person for whom Kempe extends a sort of care through her critique. Through the voice of God, she is not telling Repingdon to remember his earlier Wycliffite days, nor is she insulting him for his supposed ultra-orthodoxy, which is Thorpe’s wish. Rather she is alerting Repingdon to the context of orthodox shame in which he himself is symbolically situated: it is the clerks, not Kempe, who shame him, preventing him from making an official or affective investment in Kempe’s life of shame: “I have take my cownsel, and my cownsel wyl not yyf me to professe yow in so synguler a clothyng wythowtyn bettyr avysement” (107). This discrepancy between a bishop and his clerks is, we must bear in mind, found nowhere else in the *Book*, and offers an instance in which orthodox persons find it difficult to embrace the very identities that comprise the church: reformed heretics. Unlike Thorpe, who poses the problem of Repingdon to Arundel in such a way that the archbishop must speak favorably of the bishop (in what has to be an inside joke), Kempe makes such orthodox persons acknowledge Repingdon but voice discomfort with his decisions, the granting of the white mantle, which it appears the bishop would have originally done (were it not for his clerks): “I wyl fullfyllen yowr desyr yyf yowr husbond wyl consentyn thereto” (106).

That Kempe wishes for Repingdon to operate, like herself, outside of the rigid binaries of orthodoxy and heterodoxy is not an impossible demand on the bishop, for Kempe shows us how this imperative of brooking shame for the “love of God” is successfully enacted by others

besides herself, such as a vicar who, appropriately enough, defends Kempe from charges of heresy:

And whan sche was on a tyme moneschyd to aper befor certeyn offycerys of the Bysshop, to answer to certeyn artyculys which schuld be put ageyn hir be the steryng of envyows pepyl, the good Vykary, *preferryng the lofe of God befor any schame of the world, went wyth hir to her hir examynacyon and dehyveryd hir fro the malys of hyr enmys.* (117, my emphasis)

In fact, Repingdon's initial refusal comes after a similar situation – after Kempe is interrogated: Repingdon's "worthy clerkys and prestys and swyers" pose to her some "hard qwestyons," which she was able to answer "so redyly and pregnawntly." For Kempe, the difference between Repingdon and the vicar is easy to see: unlike the vicar, the bishop does not defend Kempe from his clerks and so fails to "love God" perfectly.

But Kempe is not only interested in advising Repingdon. She also needs this particular bishop above all others. We can recall, with Sanford Meech, that Kempe's "remission of sins [was] . . . one of the most fundamental facts of her life," and that this "remission opens the present chapter" depicting her meeting with Repingdon.<sup>90</sup> No sooner does Kempe imagine the inception of her new identity and life – indeed, of the identity we know as "Margery Kempe" – than she singles out Repingdon for a necessary visit to acquire permission to don the white mantle that symbolizes her spiritual commitments. Yet in some telling way, the inception of her new identity and life marks the inception of the *Book* itself, a connection that not only emphasizes the links between writing and penitential renewal but between Repingdon and the documentation of Kempe's own meditations:

Whan the tyme cam, sche schewyd hym hyr medytacyons, and hy contemplacyons, and other secret thyngys, both of qwyk and of ded, as owyr Lord schewyd to hir sowle. He was rygh glad to heryn hem, and suffryd hir benyngly to sey what hir lysted, and commendyd gretly hir felyngys and hir contemplacyons, seyyng thei wer hy maters and ful devowt maters, and enspyred of the Holy Gost, counselyng hir sadly þat hir felyngys schuld be wretyn. And sche seyde that it was not Goddys wil þat þei schuld be wretyn so soon, ne thei were wretyn xx yer after & more. (105)

What's striking is that Repingdon is the *only* figure depicted in the work to counsel her to write down her "felyngys" and produce what we now know as the *Book*.<sup>91</sup> Not even Archbishop Arundel, in his famous sidereal conversation with her, will suggest that her life be recorded.<sup>92</sup> From Kempe's perspective, the approval of Arundel is not necessary for her to realize her objective to wear white and pursue a life of shame, for when Repingdon suggests that she seek the archbishop's approval on that

matter, Kempe refuses and suggests she will visit him on her own accord for different reasons:<sup>93</sup> “Ser, I wyl go to my Lord of Cawntyrbere wyth ryght good wyl for other cawsys and materys which I have to schewe to hys reverens. As for this cawse I schal not gon, for God wyl not I aske hym therafter” (109).

Repingdon remains the focal point because his encouragement for Kempe to record her life is perhaps the greatest validation he could ever offer her – so great, in fact, that Kempe appears to allude to Repingdon in the Proem, which offers an account of how her meditations were eventually penned, in spite of (or because of) the prompting of clerks who supported her and who, in turn, exhibited more than a little flexibility in their orthodoxy by asking her to record her feelings:

Summe of these worthy and worshepful clerkys tokyn it, in perel of her sowle and as thei wold answer to God, that this creatur *was inspyred wyth the Holy Gost, and bodyn hyr that sche schuld don hem wretyn and makyn a booke of hyr felyngys and hir revelacyons*. Sum proferyd hir to wrytyn hyr felyngys wyth her owen handys, and sche wold not consentyn in no wey, *for sche was comaundyd in hir sowle that sche schuld not wrytyn so soone. And so it was xx yer and mor fro that tym this creatur had fyrst felyngys and revelacyons, er than sche dede any wryten*. Afterward, what it plesyd ower Lord, he comawnded hyr and chargyd hir þat sche schuld don wryten hyr felyngys and reuelacyons and the forme of her leuyng that hys goodnesse myht be knowyn to alle the world. (46–47, my emphasis; see 379–82)

Are not the lines emphasized above almost identical to Repingdon’s own advice?: “seyying thei wer hy maters and ful devowt maters, and enspyred of the Holy Gost, counselyng hir sadly þat hir felyngys schuld be wretyn. And sche seyde that it was not Goddys wil þat þei schuld be wretyn so soon, ne thei were wretyn xx yer after & more” (105). Of course, as Kempe describes the encounter with Repingdon, this bishop does not offer to *write* the *Book*. That distinction goes to the two scribes first mentioned in the Proem and elsewhere. Scribal influences are no doubt central to any consideration of the *Book*’s mediated process of inscription (see 141).<sup>94</sup> But here we are looking closely at Kempe’s preferences in attaining ecclesiastical approval from specific persons to verify her life, which is always on the verge of being written (see 140–41, 46); the importance of Repingdon in instilling in Kempe a sense of authority in the literal sense – an appeal for her to be an author – is key here. Given that no one else in the account encourages her to record her feelings in such a direct way, and given that her response to Repingdon is nearly identical to that here – compare the temporal alignments between “ne thei were wretyn xx yer after & more” to “[a]nd so it was xx 3er and mor fro

bat tym þis creatur had fyrst felyngys" (see 50–51, 377) – we find that Repingdon makes a cameo appearance in the Proem. This Repingdon offers advice "on peril" of his "soul" and finally returns the ethical care to Kempe.<sup>95</sup>

It is no surprise, then, that the Proem reaches forward to the episode involving Repingdon when she is first counseled to record her feelings, in the same manner in which Repingdon is said to have anticipated, indeed desired, his meeting with Kempe: "he derly wolcomyd hir and seyde he had long desyred to speke wyth hir, and he was ryght glad of hir comyng" (105). From very early on in the *Book*, then, she imagines Repingdon's identity as the grid against which to figure forth her social and written identity as complex, and bound up with conceptual paradoxes not very different from those haunting Repingdon in the public record – the heretic that may be holy, the Christian that may be a Jew, the angel who may be a demon.

#### THE FORM OF EMOTION

My foray into the topic of "Kempe and Wycliffism" is an investigation of affective affinities between both. Such a study realizes the overall aim of this book, which is to show that each author discussed throughout offers us a unique and sometimes surprising view of Wycliffism that we may ourselves further explore. Likewise, assessing Kempe in the Wycliffite context has its own advantages, enabling us to consider the broader implications of the affective strategies that Wycliffism makes available in the identity of the shamed and shameful "lollard" – the very identity that Kempe, time and again, seems to embrace. Yet our sense of Kempe's *Book* also stands to gain from this affective investigation, in so far as "affect" is perhaps the last of the categories to be properly historicized by critics of late medieval writing. So much of the best literary and historical work on Kempe's *Book*, in other words, deals with affect in a transhistorical manner, which assumes simply that emotion and sense are transcendent categories ready for redescription on the part of readers. For instance, Clarissa Atkinson writes of Kempe: "Besides, her life on the boundary of Church and society was psychically and physically dangerous and exhausting, and she needed the support and reassurance of respected persons in order to maintain her determination and self-confidence."<sup>96</sup> What Kempe experiences as "dangerous" is what the critic – historicist or otherwise – redescribes as "dangerous." This is a ubiquitous rhetorical practice on the part of critics. The point is that in historicist readings, or

even in those that view the *Book* as auto-historicist in the sense that it contains its own horizons of historical interpretation – the forms and genres that mediate these affects disappear. Granted, what Atkinson and so many other critics evince in their work is sympathy for Kempe, but what provokes these critical sympathies, I believe, are specific affective forms that Kempe draws into her work so as to enliven it. Affect is mediated by form and as such confers onto the text historicity. If criticism has learned a collective lesson about the limits of historicism – simply, that not only images of status, rank, and class, nor the language of politics, are susceptible to diachronic and synchronic analysis, and that language is itself the image of history – we might further historicize the forms of affect, which are no more transhistorical than bodies, and no more elusive than ideologies. For my part here, were we to view affect in strictly transhistorical terms, we would risk rendering as moot the question of Kempe and Wycliffism, and it has been this chapter's proposition that heeding affective forms – and these, of course, are not limited to what is available in "affective piety" – will show us a way out of the particular binaries that are used by medieval and modern critics alike to characterize Kempe's religiosity.

PART V

*Epilogue*



## *Heresy, Wycliffism, and English literary history*

Augustine, citing Paul (1 Cor. 11.19), asserts that the “condemnation of heretics of course makes apparent what your church believes and what correct doctrine holds. For there must also be heresies, so that the approved may be manifest among the weak.”<sup>1</sup> Rendering active the passive voice in Paul, we can say more directly that heresy is necessary – so necessary, in fact, that it was always already a part of the Christian tradition as soon as the latter began to recognize itself as orthodox, singular, and authoritative.<sup>2</sup> Even the Gospels and Pauline epistles themselves can be said to disclose all heresies *avant la lettre*, a point John Wyclif himself knew well. Writing after a time when his views were already described by Pope Gregory XI as “heresies smacking of depravity,” as the canonical saying goes, Wyclif elaborates upon the same Pauline passage:<sup>3</sup> “unde cum omnis heresis sit mala moraliter contra fidem, in scriptura autem omnis fides includitur et omne viciū condempnatur, patet, quod omnes hereses vel earum opposita reperies in scriptura . . . omnis heresis est in scriptura [whereupon since every heresy is an evil morally opposed to the faith, and moreover since every aspect of the faith is included in scripture and every vice condemned, it is certain that you will discover all heresies and their opposites in scripture . . . Every heresy is (known) in scripture].”<sup>4</sup> If this is the case, then one can generalize and say that in the Judaeo-Christian West there was never an era without heresy. Both early Christian and medieval heresiologists continually made distinctions between orthodoxy and heterodoxy within shared cultural forms and spiritualities,<sup>5</sup> and in the unfolding of texts and traditions such distinctions were retained.<sup>6</sup>

If heresy is a necessary component of Christian theology, is it a necessary feature of English literary history? If we adopt a diachronic perspective we can readily see that in the early and mid-fourteenth century (and earlier), the problems of heresy were very different from those in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries. In the earlier part of the century, heresy was



always a matter of canon law, pastoral and penitential care, and theology. Robert Mannyng had no equivalent to Wycliffism in his lifetime, and neither did the author of *Cursor Mundi* nor the poet of "The Simonie."<sup>7</sup> Whatever other heresies were afoot in England in these years, the fact of the matter is there was no native ecclesiastical initiative as publicly significant as the Blackfriars Council in bringing infamous notoriety to one particular heresy; likewise, there was no literary and intellectual movement like Wycliffism to appear coterminously with the boom in vernacular book production, as there was in the late fourteenth century and continuing on into the fifteenth century.<sup>8</sup> The point here is that the late fourteenth century is as distinctive as the literature is new. For at this time the Langlandian, Chaucerian, and Lydgatean traditions emerge only to supersede the previous forms of writing Ralph Hanna has uncovered in his book, *London Literature, 1300–1380*. And Wycliffism emerges right at this time, right near the beginning of the end delineated by Hanna.<sup>9</sup> As such, it must be central to our sense of English literary history because it was on the inside, not outside, of the literary and interpretative communities of late medieval England. Accordingly, Wycliffism is less a "context" or "background" of affairs than part of the processes of cultural negotiation itself, an emergent fund of ideas, forms, and rhetorics that helped various medieval authors think anew about the past and the present, about traditions and conventions, aesthetics and politics – about, fundamentally, what it means to write. When Chaucer thinks of vernacular translation, he thinks of Wycliffism. When Hoccleve and Lydgate apply their often topically inflected forms of writing to religious and ecclesiastical issues, they again think of Wycliffism. When Langland and Kempe assess the viability of new forms of religiosity, they, too, think of Wycliffism and the generative debates about "lollardy" that appear to go to the core of their figured authorial identities – Will as a "lollare" in C5, Kempe as a "loller" shamed for Christ.

One can contest the centrality of Wycliffism, replace it with something else, or set it against reformist movements thought to be the real heresies of England.<sup>10</sup> One may even seek to divide and subsume its explanatory significance into the two poles of reform and revolution persuasively advanced by James Simpson in his literary history.<sup>11</sup> But we can accept those two poles as interpretively viable if the only thing we happen to see in Wycliffism is a revolutionary kind of reform singularly aimed at changing the church and its structures by any means necessary. That is not the only version of Wycliffism available, however, and the authors studied here demonstrate as much. This is not to wave away an important

analysis offered by Simpson. In fact, it is to piggyback onto his lasting conclusions about the afterlives of reformist thinking in medieval and Renaissance literature. No doubt, late medieval England witnessed a number of political, legal, cultural, religious, and aesthetic attempts to reconceptualize the structures of church authority, alongside an equal number of efforts to represent forms of royal conduct, display, and legitimacy. Whether such attempts were Wycliffite or not, they had to deal with Wycliffism owing to its ubiquity and scandal, and that particular negotiation (however explicit or symptomatic) immediately places Wycliffism within the imaginative registers of so much medieval writing.

Let's review what some of those alternative versions of reform look like. Recent work has shown that versions of Hildegardian reform were imported to England and were available to and appropriated by Wycliffite and non-Wycliffite authors alike as yet another remedy to ecclesiastical and social ills.<sup>12</sup> Likewise, Franciscan versions of reform are in many instances almost impossible to extricate from Wycliffite ones in the 1380s on: to imagine yourself as a radical Franciscan seeking to return the order to its primary ambitions was, in most cases, a simultaneous effort to consider your relationship to Wycliffite neo-Franciscanism.<sup>13</sup> The well-known conciliar and provincial reforms enacted in the fifteenth century, such as Archbishop Arundel's Constitutions and portions of the business at the Council of Constance (1414–18), offered versions of reform that absorbed the Wycliffite critique itself about the importance of lay instruction and the corruption of the ecclesiastical administration. Both Nicholas Love's translation of the pseudo-Bonaventurian *Meditationes Vitae Christi* and the later vernacular *summa* of Bishop Reginald Pecock assume that orthodox alternatives to the Wycliffite models of vernacularity and scriptural hermeneutics need to be offered.<sup>14</sup> Between those reformist poles (the orthodox and the Wycliffite) are the literary examples I have explored here – complete with their mix of secular and theological preoccupations. And after those examples come their legacies, themselves embedded in Wycliffite receptions and contexts. For instance, it goes without saying that Langland's *Piers Plowman* is not a Wycliffite work, but the poem is itself imbricated in Wycliffite history, attested by the very existence of the "Piers Plowman Tradition" (inclusive of later works such as "The Prayer and Complaint of the Plowman unto Christ"), as well as Wycliffite interpolations to manuscripts of the poem, such as University of London, MS S.L. V.88 (the "Ilchester" manuscript). The Wycliffite reception of Chaucer in works such as "The Plowman's Tale" and "The Ploughman's Tale" must be understood as partly responsible for

communicating one very strong idea about “Chaucer” – the Wycliffite Chaucer who began to appear in the sixteenth and early seventeenth century.<sup>15</sup> That the Wycliffite poem “Jack Upland” was once regarded by John Foxe and John Gough as Chaucerian adds only another layer to the already sedimented biography of a poet with Wycliffite interests.<sup>16</sup> Simply put, the presence of other kinds of reform in medieval England only makes Wycliffism more prominent as it rhizomatically moves through a variety of genres and modes.

It is beyond the brief of this book to decide whether Wycliffism was a “premature reformation” partly responsible for the Magisterial Reformation.<sup>17</sup> But it is well within the ambit of conclusions presented here to say that Wycliffism is part and parcel of a literary history made by authors who lived and wrote during one of the most interesting and intense moments in English literary and religious history.

## Notes

### PREFACE

- 1 See Simpson's characterization of Bale and Leland in *Reform and Cultural Revolution*, 7, 11.
- 2 For other problems with such an account of Wycliffism, see my "Heresy and Humanism."
- 3 Kerby-Fulton, *Reformist Apocalypticism and Books under Suspicion*; Scase, *New Anticlericalism*.
- 4 Copeland, *Pedagogy*; Ghosh, *Wycliffite Heresy*. Somerset's *Clerical Discourse*, however, contains a chapter on Langland.
- 5 Jameson, *Singular Modernity*, 35.
- 6 Even the most recent work, however, seeks to argue that Wycliffism "was not unique" (Kerby-Fulton, *Books under Suspicion*, 3).

### THE BLACKFRIARS COUNCIL, LONDON, 1382

- 1 EWS, 1.481.
- 2 Here and below I refer only to the first and most important session of the Council that produced the condemned conclusions.
- 3 Simpson, "Constraints of Satire," 18.
- 4 "Langland and the Bibliographic Ego," 70 (referencing Simpson's "Constraints of Satire" at 75–76). See also Kerby-Fulton's *Books under Suspicion* on the "new climate of constraint on theological discussion" (375) and more generally "the sense of constraint" (19). For similar examples of this view in criticism, see von Nolcken, "Piers Plowman, the Wycliffites," 76–77.
- 5 Kerby-Fulton, "Piers Plowman," 522.
- 6 Kerby-Fulton, "Langland and the Bibliographic Ego," 70.
- 7 The two instances of such official committees I am aware of were *ad hoc*, specifically targeted against works of Wyclif, and inconclusive in their results. Efforts to check a scribal reproduction for textual accuracy cannot always be counted as "censorship." For further discussion, see "Wycliffism: the heresy of the vernacular?" in Chapter 4, and note 32 there.
- 8 "Acts of Vagrancy," 291; see also 287–88.

- 9 See Walsingham, *Historia Anglicana*, 1.356, where Wyclif's meeting with Sudbury and Courtenay at St. Paul's is confused with the later meeting at Lambeth, which did not end in riot.
- 10 For instance, in 1377 at St. Paul's, Wyclif's propositions were deemed to be true and orthodox ("eas veras esse"), but they sounded ill to the ears of listeners ("sed male sonare in auribus auditorum") [*Continuatio Eulogii*, 348]). The proviso is close to Gregory XI's own findings in his bulls of 1377: "nonnullas Propositiones et Conclusiones erroneas et falsas, et male in fide sonantes [some propositions and conclusions (of Wyclif), erroneous and false, sounding ill from the perspective of faith]" (Walsingham, *Historia Anglicana*, 1.348 [second bull]). Note that this first trial or interview at St. Paul's could not have been a response to Gregory's bulls, which arrived later.
- 11 For these earlier events, see Dahmus, *Prosecution*, 7–88; Catto, "Wyclif and Wycliffism at Oxford 1356–1430," 204–08; and Kelly, "Trial Procedures," 4–10.
- 12 Crompton, "Leicestershire Lollards," 13.
- 13 On such disputes, see Fletcher, "Inter-Faculty Disputes in Late Medieval Oxford," in Hudson and Wilks, 331–42. Courtenay himself was, as R. N. Swanson indicates in his entry for the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, "a master and professor of civil law" (13.688).
- 14 *Knighton's Chronicle*, 298–99.
- 15 *Polychronicon*, 8.461.
- 16 See Richardson, "Heresy and the Lay Power," 7. Dahmus discusses a Ricardian statute intended to curtail unlicensed preachers and the "spread of Lollardy" from Oxford (*Prosecution*, 99). See also Hudson, "Wycliffism in Oxford 1381–1411." For Catto, see "Wyclif and Wycliffism at Oxford 1356–1430" and "Theology after Wycliffism," in Catto and Evans, 175–261 and 263–80, respectively. For McHardy, see her "Dissemination of Wyclif's Ideas," 361–68. For Aston, see "Wycliffe and the Vernacular," in *Faith and Fire*, 38. While Wilks suggests that Wyclif intended reform from the top-down, portions of his argument still apply to the terms discussed here; see his essay, "Royal Priesthood: the Origins of Lollardy," in *Wyclif: Political Ideas and Practice*, 103. See also the important (even if at points now dated) Ph.D. thesis by Kightly, "Early Lollards," 307.
- 17 Cannon, "The Poor Priests"; Workman, *John Wyclif*, 2.201–20.
- 18 Catto, "Wyclif and Wycliffism at Oxford 1356–1430," in Catto and Evans, 214, which appears to echo a statement made by Hudson concerning Wycliffites "on preaching tours of the countryside" (*Lollards and Their Books*, 142). Another view is that persons who were already religious dissenters of one stripe or another joined up with the Wycliffites. See Leff, *Heresy*, 2.494; Davies, "Lollardy and Locality," 199; Justice, "Lollardy," 668–69; Rex, *The Lollards*, 54–59.
- 19 The relevance of canon law to late medieval heresy cases in England has finally appeared in scholarship focused on inquisition, its legality, and the rights of the accused; see Forrest, *Detection of Heresy*. There is also a relevant series of articles by Kelly: "Lollard Inquisitions" and "Trial Procedures Against Wyclif

- and Wycliffites.” See also “Inquisitorial Due Process and the Status of Secret Crimes.”
- 20 On the 6 May summons, see McNiven, *Heresy and Politics*, 34.
  - 21 *Concilia*, 3.158 (this copy went to the Bishop of London, 30 May). Also on 30 May, Courtenay wrote Robert Rygge (Oxford’s chancellor) requiring him to publish this mandate, *FZ*, 298–99. On 28 May, Courtenay sent a letter to Peter Stokes (who reported to the archbishop the Wycliffite happenings at Oxford) and the language in this letter (*ibid.*, 275–82) is basically that of the subsequent mandate discussed here.
  - 22 A view that is articulated in the memorandum: “dictas conclusiones in multis locis dictae nostrae provincinae fuisse ... praedicatas [the said conclusions have been preached in many places of our aforementioned province]” (*Concilia*, 3.157).
  - 23 *Corpus Iuris Canonici*, 2.788.
  - 24 For Innocent III’s letter, see *PL* 214:690–99. For more on the context, see Audisio, *Waldensian Dissent*.
  - 25 See *Corpus Iuris Canonici*, 2.785–86, 788–89; also 372, 876. See *Decrees of Ecumenical Councils*, 1.235n1, where Tanner suggests that the phrase in question probably originates in “pope Lucius III’s decree against heretics at the council of Verona in 1184.”
  - 26 Hudson concludes that preaching within Oxford was the subject of focus at the Council: “in view of the dates of Hereford’s sermon and of the sessions of the Council, it seems credible that the course of the latter was affected by the information purveyed by Stokes about the seriousness of the threat posed by the former” (*Premature Reformation*, 72).
  - 27 *Statuta antiqua*, 49–50. On these two kinds of sermon, see Wenzel, “Academic Sermons,” 306, and *Latin Sermon Collections*, 297–304. There is a third sort of sermon (*principia*) that prefaces a public reading of the *Sententiae* or the Bible (“Academic Sermons,” 306–07); and a fourth (*commendationes*) that relates to the master’s inception (308–09).
  - 28 On the intrigues of university preaching in the context of the Blackfriars Council, see Scase, “‘Heu! quanta desolatio Angliæ praestatur’.” On Wyclif’s sermon strategies, see Dolnikowski, “Preaching at Oxford.”
  - 29 For those armed supporters of the Wycliffites, see *FZ*, 302. A king’s letter did identify “unlawful assemblies or confederacies” at Oxford, which were impeding the chancellor’s work; see *Calendar of the Close Rolls: Richard II*, 2.521. The term was, however, also applied to rebels: see *ibid.*, 138. On the “conventicula haereticorum,” see Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiarum*, 8.1; and *Corpus Iuris Canonici*, 2.781, 785, 787. More generally, see Collinson, “The English Conventicle.”
  - 30 See the persons cited by Forrest (*Detection of Heresy*, 118), who calls Arundel’s effort a “licensing programme” (121). On the problems with such investigations into heresy, see Hudson, *Premature Reformation*, 101, concerning Peter Payne.
  - 31 My phrase, “scholastic heretics,” follows Workman: “the record of scholasticism is the record of all sorts of minor heretics, for differences of thought soon became

differences in belief. But as a rule these minor heretics were unreal; their beliefs were mere matters of argument vitiated by the tradition of double truth, or adopted to advertise the Determinations or Quodlibeta" (*John Wyclif*, 1.146).

32 McNiven, *Heresy and Politics*, 34.

33 Dahmus, *Prosecution*, 92.

34 FZ, 286; *Concilia*, 3.158; recorded present as "Willelmus Wyntoniensis." An entry (summary) in the patent rolls seems to confirm Wykeham's importance: the "king's clerk William de Wykeham, his secretary, who stays by his side in constant attendance on his service, and who with all his servants is under the king's personal protection" (*Calendar of the Patent Rolls: Edward III*, 12.444–45). McKisack calls Wykeham Edward's "right hand man" (*Fourteenth Century*, 225).

35 See the entry by Peter Partner on "William Wykeham," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 60.638. See also Given-Wilson, *Royal Household*, 36, 155–56, 200; Ormrod, *Reign of Edward III*, 93–94.

36 Wykeham's temporalities were given to Richard of Bordeaux (the future Richard II); see McKisack, *Fourteenth Century*, 395.

37 Dahmus, *William Courtenay*, 30; see *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 13.689. As McKisack put it, Gaunt's "objective seems to have been twofold – restoration of the prestige of the Crown and humiliation of his episcopal opponents by the adoption of a hostile attitude to clerical privilege and papal claims" (*Fourteenth Century*, 395).

38 *Ibid.*, 396.

39 Doubtless, during the proceedings, Wyclif argued strenuously for himself and seems to have personalized matters in possibly alluding to Wykeham, by far the most wealthy of pluralists in England, as a certain rich bishop "wise in the building of castles" (McKisack, *Fourteenth Century*, 227). McKisack does not identify this quote, but in *De Ecclesia*, Wyclif does recommend that Wykeham's collegiate foundations be dissolved and the money redistributed (370–71). On Wykeham's service in the oversight of royal buildings see *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 60.636–37.

40 McKisack, *Fourteenth Century*, 397, 393; Dahmus, *William Courtenay*, 43. Courtenay's stopping a riot from ensuing at the Savoy against Gaunt in 1377 could be thought to have improved relations between the men, but Dahmus speculates, "[p]robably not" (*ibid.*, 41).

41 On "21. die ejusdem mensis [Maii] [on the twenty-first day of the same month of May]," the Blackfriars Council "declaratum aliquas conclusionum esse haereticas, et aliquas erroneas [declared some conclusions to be heretical, some erroneous]" (*Concilia*, 3.157).

42 Wykeham's mandate reads more fully: "Et evidenter in sacris canonibus est repertum, quod nullus, nisi qui mittitur, debeat in ecclesia Dei vel aliis locis publicis sibi predicacionis officium usurpare vel illud publice exercere [and in the sacred canons it is clearly reported that no one, unless he is sent, ought to usurp to himself the office of preacher in the church of God or other public places]" (*Wykeham's Register*, 2.337–38).

43 *Ibid.*, 2.338.

- 44 *Premature Reformation*, 70 and n62. She also suggests that “it is highly improbable that, with the list of hereticated opinions that emanated from that Council [at Blackfriars], he would have been so vague about the errors that the preachers were propagating” (70).
- 45 “Blackfryers” is identified on Claes Jansz. Visscher’s early seventeenth-century map, *Londinum florentissima Britanniae urbs* (London, British Library, Maps C.5.a.6).
- 46 Here I am citing Kelly (“Trial Procedures Against Wyclif and Wycliffites,” 1), who notes that such *fama* is canonically necessary in the prosecution heresy cases but suggests that such opinion was not in evidence in the relevant instances related to the Blackfriars Council (see 12, 18, 20). Kelly, however, does not consider Wykeham’s important mandate, and below we will take stock of its strategic timing with the Council. For further discussion of *fama*, see Kelly, “Inquisition and the Prosecution of Heresy,” 446.
- 47 Repingdon is not named in Wykeham’s document. Hudson suggests that the “list of preachers [in Wykeham’s mandate, absent Repingdon’s name] is evidence of its independence of events in Oxford or London” (Hudson, *Premature Reformation*, 70). An equally valid explanation of this omission (which is also an argument against such independence) is that Repingdon had yet to announce himself as a Wycliffite devotee of the order of a Nicholas Hereford preaching his Ascension Day sermon (15 May 1382). He would soon, however, do just that in giving the Corpus Christi Day Sermon on 5 June (see *FZ*, 299–300) – after, we may note, the first Blackfriars publications, and Wykeham’s mandate. Repingdon also pronounced heretical views on 7 June, it is reported (*FZ*, 302). Repingdon’s absence from Wykeham’s mandate makes perfect sense, then, and is not a measure of independence of said mandate from the proceedings at Blackfriars. There is, we can note, one source that retrospectively puts Repingdon outside of Oxford before May – the *FZ*’s chronicler’s narrative: “Repyngdone ... apud Bracle prædicaverat materiam Wyclyff de sacramento altaris [Repingdon preaches at Brackley Wyclif’s subject matter against the sacrament of the altar]” (296). Brackley is about twenty miles from Oxford; by road nowadays, some twenty-one miles. Persons at the Blackfriars Council, especially Bishop John Buckingham within whose diocese Brackley falls, seem not to have capitalized on this detail. Were they aware of it? The main point is that Repingdon’s transgressions are here cast by the *FZ* chronicler as an academic problem (he preached before he incepted) rather than one connected to preaching rights within limits or parishes. McHardy suggests that “Repingdon’s presence there can be explained by the fact that the living was in the gift of his abbey, St. Mary of the Meadows, Leicester” (“Dissemination of Wyclif’s Ideas,” 362; see also Kightly, “Early Lollards,” 48) – with the implication being that Brackley is a natural place for Repingdon to visit. As for Lawrence Bedeman, he appears to be a case of mistaken identity, as he is never recorded to have repudiated heresy. For instance, on 18 September, before Bishop Brantingham, Bedeman “se ostendit Canonice



- liberum et inunum [showed himself to canonically free and immune (or innocent)]” and “Catholicum et super erroribus seu heresibus hujusmodi pretensis nullatenus irretitum [Catholic and in no manner entangled in any such pretended errors or heresies]” (*Register of Thomas de Brantingham*, 1.158; undated; fol. 32v). And while Wykeham included Bedeman in his important mandate of 21 May, the bishop himself exonerated him on 22 October (*Wykeham's Register*, 2.342–43). While mine is not the task to make a total case for Wykeham's mercy towards persons caught in the anti-Wycliffite fray, it is appropriate to point out that it is reported that Wykeham beseeches Courtenay to pardon Rygge (*FZ*, 304). Perhaps that story led Moberly to conclude that Wykeham was a “moderator of the Synod's zeal against the Lollards” (*Life of William of Wykeham*, 195).
- 48 Kightly, “Early Lollards,” 309; Forrest also finds that both Courtenay's and Wykeham's mandates are odd, evincing “a lack of practical sense” in their recommendation that sermon audiences “flee [the heretic preacher] on pain of excommunication as if he were a venomous snake emitting poison” (*Detection of Heresy*, 64).
- 49 Catto, “Wyclif and Wycliffism at Oxford 1381–1411,” in Catto and Evans, 214; or, “Courtenay was not generalizing from isolated incidents in Oxford alone is evident from the mandate sent out by William of Wykeham” (Hudson, *Premature Reformation*, 70).
- 50 *Premature Reformation*, 70n61.
- 51 *Corpus Iuris Canonici*, 2.788–89. Courtenay called Rygge to Lambeth Palace to justify his invitations to Hereford and Repingdon to preach within the university on important feast days, Ascension Day (15 May) and Corpus Christi (5 June), respectively; see *FZ*, 296–97. Indeed, Rygge was suspected of heresy not for any doctrinal views he held but rather for a set of actions not dissimilar to those claimed of the Vicar of Odiham. For a redacted transcript of Hereford's sermon, see Forde, “Nicholas Hereford's Ascension Day Sermon.”
- 52 *Wykeham's Register*, 2.337. The vicar's name, known only as “Iohannes” in Wykeham's mandate, can now be confirmed as John atte Hethe. The archivist of the parish church of Odiham, Sheila Millard, indicates to me that “Odiham parish had a rector (who was also Chancellor of Salisbury) and a vicar” (personal communication) – John Norton and John atte Hethe, respectively. Kightly confuses the two Johns by identifying Norton (Chancellor of Salisbury) as the vicar (see “Early Lollards,” 307–10). This information also corrects McHardy, “Dissemination of Wyclif's Ideas,” 361–62. My thanks to Ms. Millard for her assistance in this inquiry.
- 53 For examples of Wycliffites troubling vicars, see *Peasants' Rising and the Lollards*, 47; see 49, and Walsingham, *Historia Anglicana*, 2.56, where Swynderby is said to have preached his heresies before a vicar.
- 54 For an example, see Repingdon's notification that he published Arundel's Constitutions: vol. 57.153; 74.17–18; see also 58.241–42, and the certification in Bishop Hallum's register: *Register of Robert Hallum*, 141. Peter Stokes confirmed that he executed Courtenay's request to present the latter's mandate to Robert

Rygge, *FZ*, 300–01, but claimed that Rygge failed in his “executio” of “vestri mandati” (*ibid.*, 301; see also 302).

55 *Roman Canon Law*, 58.

56 *FZ*, 286.

57 For more on this bishop (though there is no extended discussion of Swynderby), see McHardy, “Bishop Buckingham.”

58 Lincolnshire Archives Office, Register 12: Register of John Buckingham (Memoranda), fol. 236v; hereafter, “Lincoln reg. Buckingham.”

59 “Wyclif and Wycliffism at Oxford 1381–1411,” in Catto and Evans, 214n134. On Swynderby’s possible connection to Wyclif’s thought, see Hudson, *Premature Reformation*, 75.

60 This point is McHardy’s: “Thus Buckingham took action before additional powers were obtained from the lay arm and before the Blackfriars council itself met, though it may be conjectured that when he acted he had the forthcoming council in view. Buckingham issued the commission to Swynderby’s two judges on 12 May 1382 when he was in London for the council” (“Bishop Buckingham,” 131). McHardy conjectures that Buckingham began to act sometime between 6 May, the date of Courtenay’s summons calling the Council, and 12 May.

61 The items related to Buckingham’s investigation into Swynderby’s doings seem to have been arranged and copied together from either the bishop’s courtbook or notarial sheets. They were further revised for official submission and eventually included in the *Fasciculi Zizaniorum*, and in very redacted form, Knighton’s chronicle; see *FZ*, 334–36; *Knighton’s Chronicle*, 310–13; more fully, 307–25.

62 See also *FZ*, 277–82.

63 See Lincoln reg. Buckingham fols. 242v–243r.

64 Hudson, *Premature Reformation*, 74. Martin also finds that the articles initially laid against Swynderby represent an “intermediate stage of the process against him” (*Knighton’s Chronicle*, 313n1). Hudson confirms: “the phraseology of Swinderby’s articles as recorded in Buckingham’s register owes as much to the deliberations of the Blackfriars Council as it does to Swinderby’s own utterances.” See her itemization, *Premature Reformation*, 74, and also the analysis by Kightly, “Early Lollards,” 66. Hudson does, however, note that some of the conclusions do not match those at Blackfriars (see *Premature Reformation*, 75). It would seem that this material was probably revised further for official notice. We may also bear in mind that the Ricardian mandate to arrest heretical preachers stipulates a broad reading of the condemned conclusions, “vel etiam alicujus conclusionis alicui earumdem consimilis in sententia vel in verbis [or even any conclusion similar in sense or in words to any of them]” (*Concilia*, 3.166). Swynderby, in 1391, defended himself against the charges from 1382; see *Register of John Trefnant*, 240–41.

65 Whatever fray there was in 1367 between Buckingham and Courtenay surrounding the latter’s appointment as Chancellor of Oxford (see Dahmus, *William Courtenay*, 2–4), it seems not to have been a hindrance to their cooperation at Blackfriars.

- 66 FZ, 287.
- 67 Lincoln reg. Buckingham fol. 243v. For a slightly different version, see FZ, 334.
- 68 See McHardy, “Bishop Buckingham,” 137–45. My argument here, then, can be construed as the explanation behind Crompton’s insight that “Much of what Swynderby popularised brings to light the rich religious undergrowth of medieval England”; what he, along with William Smith, preached “could have been said just as well if Wyclif had not lived” (“Leicestershire Lollards,” 19; see also Kightly, “Early Lollards,” 54).
- 69 Note the 1392 petition by Richard Stormsworth against the Mayor of Northampton, John Fox, which says: “Many of the said preachers were encouraged in Northampton to borrow [furred hoods and habits] during the time of their sermons; in order to pass themselves off as great clerks in deception of the common people, so that these would support the Lollards” (Kightly, “Early Lollards,” 104).
- 70 In 1389, John Trefnant, Bishop of Hereford, brought Swynderby to trial on charges of heresy and had a copy of the earlier condemnation by Buckingham enrolled in his register; see *Register of John Trefnant*, 231 (abbreviated). Accusations are not an ideal measure of belief, as they are the first step in an inquiry; likewise, abjurations, almost always secured by compulsion (as Swynderby’s was; see 239), are problematic. In the end, we must assess Swynderby’s own statements, which are also enrolled in Trefnant’s register: see 237–51, 252–53, 257–61, 262–70, 271–75, 275–78. Swynderby denied all of the charges yet addressed them as topics worthy of elaboration. Notably, he issued no detailed expiation on the eucharist (see 243, 245, 267) and seemed to be concerned largely with the rights to preach. To say that the later Swynderby represents the “wilder reaches of Lollardy” (Hudson, *Premature Reformation*, 422) is to concede that he is a reformer of his own making, even if he bears some similarities with the Wycliffites. That said, Swynderby needs more study – specifically in relation to vernacular Wycliffite tracts.
- 71 *Knighton’s Chronicle*, 306–07.
- 72 *Chronicon Angliae*, 338; *Historia Anglicana*, 2.53.
- 73 See FZ, 296–97.
- 74 FZ, 309–10.
- 75 *Rotuli parliamentorum*, 3.124–25; abbreviations expanded silently, and capitalization modified. Richardson notes that this parliament “opened on 7 May 1382” (“Heresy and the Lay Power,” 6). Because, as he points out, the “commons had departed on 22 May, having apparently heard nothing of the archbishop’s petition,” we can assume that the petition was not yet filed, for when “parliament met again at Michaelmas [in the fall of 1382] the commons protested” the petition (8) – having obviously heard about it. In other words, if Courtenay pleaded this petition – and Dahmus suggests that he did (*Prosecution*, 98) – he likely did not do so until after the Blackfriars Council in May. The text of the parliamentary entry would confirm this view, as it mirrors the language of documents Courtenay produced in May, and states that the Council had already met.

- 76 Any person from Oxford who resisted the archbishop or moved out of step with the church was now, by default, resisting the king himself – a position bolstered by that royal mandate of 13 July (see *FZ*, 312–14; *Concilia*, 3.166–67). For subsequent commissions similar to those proposed in the Ricardian statute, see *Calendar of the Patent Rolls: Richard II*, 3.145–46, 200.
- 77 *Historia Anglicana*, 2.188. See also *Historia Vitae*, 72.
- 78 There is a connection worth mentioning here between perceptions about heretical preachers and the earlier Peasants' Rising in the fall of 1381. On 26 April 1381, John Ball, who would later be identified as a rebel leader, was cited by Archbishop Simon Sudbury (with the then Bishop of London, Courtenay) as a pseudo-preacher holding schismatic views and errors “quae haereticum sonant pravitatem, et alia enormia [that sound of heretical depravity and other enormities]” (*Concilia*, 3.152). Ball's heresies were unspecified both here and in an earlier arrest warrant dated 25 February 1364 (*Calendar of the Patent Rolls: Edward III*, 12.470; see also *Concilia*, 3.64–65). However, Walsingham, writing some years after the fact, lists his heresies (*Chronicon Angliae*, 320–21), and Justice suggests that the chronicler derived this list “from the trial's proceedings” before Ball's execution (*Writing and Rebellion*, 103) and goes further to say “[w]hatever actual connection between Ball and Wyclif, it is certain that the episcopacy wanted such a connection” (103n3). We can confirm that episcopal and metropolitan wish for a connection. For in April of 1381 Sudbury identified Ball as a “usurping preacher” – “sibi praedicationis officium usurpare” (*Concilia*, 3.152) – the very canonical language his soon-to-be successor, Courtenay, would apply just a year later to the Oxford Wycliffites, retrospectively associating that group with Ball and the rebels. The *FZ* compiler, among others, registers this perception. Writing nearly a decade later, he introduces the events involving the Blackfriars Council by speaking about Ball and sermons that lead to “insurrectionem” (*FZ*, 273). He says that Ball, while in custody, declared himself a disciple of Wyclif (“erat discipulus Wyclyff” [*ibid.*]) and spoke of the existence of a “certa comitiva de secta et doctrina Wyclyff [certain companions of the sect and teachings of Wyclif]” who formed a “confœderationem [confederation]” of preachers sent by Wyclif to preach all over England (“totam Angliam”) (*ibid.*, 274) – the same confederacy to be deplored in a 1387 mandate by Bishop Henry Wakefield; see *Concilia*, 2.202 and Chapter 2, 32. The *FZ* compiler later speaks of Hereford's and Reppingdon's insurrectional preaching (296, 299). I believe by these verbal associations did the Wycliffites gain a reputation as treasonous rebels. Of course, this would not be the last time such an opinion held sway. For a similar corroboration, see *Knighton's Chronicle*, 243.
- 79 I exclude John Purvey, as he was not implicated during the Blackfriars Council. Hudson shows, however, that “[b]y 1387–88 Purvey was known to the ecclesiastical authorities as a significant heretic, worthy of being grouped with Hereford and Aston ... It should be noted that Purvey is not mentioned in the early series of proclamations against the followers of Wyclif from 1382 onwards” (“John Purvey: A Reconsideration of Evidence,” in *Lollards and Their Books*, 86).

- 80 As explained above, Brightwell was with Rygge when he visited Lambeth Palace on 12 June. Neither had to justify any purported heretical conclusions; see above and *FZ*, 304–08. Cf. McHardy, “Dissemination of Wyclif’s Ideas,” 366.
- 81 Thomas Hulman was made to answer, beginning 20 June 1382, to the conclusions produced at the Blackfriars Council and explain his support of John Aston. His case does not involve any reports of his preaching outside of Oxford (see *Concilia*, 3.164–65). McHardy speculates the locations he may have visited, however; see “Dissemination of Wyclif’s Ideas,” 364–65.
- 82 On John Ashwardby, see Hudson, *Premature Reformation*, 95–97, where there is information concerning his disputes with the Carmelite Richard Maidstone, who associated Ashwardby’s opinions with “those *qui sunt de secta lollardorum*” (96). For a different view, see McHardy, “Dissemination of Wyclif’s Ideas,” 364. In 1384, John Corringham, a fellow at Merton, renounced a set of heretical opinions; see Lincoln reg. Buckingham fol. 272r; more fully, fols. 271v–272; also in the appendix of McHardy, “Bishop Buckingham,” 143. As Kelly indicates, only two of his conclusions relate to Wyclif, while “two others might be said to stem from the Wycliffite doctrines that God should obey the devil” – which is an extremely selective citation of Wyclif’s writings – “and that no pope after Urban VI should be recognized” (“Trial Procedures Against Wyclif and Wycliffites,” 9). Also on Corringham, see Kightly, “Early Lollards,” 74i–74ii.
- 83 *Concilia*, 3.166–67; *FZ*, 312–14. Hudson’s final (and in my mind most important) argument is that Wycliffism was not, contrary to critical opinion, “a spent force in Oxford by the time Wyclif himself died on 31 December 1384” (“Wycliffism in Oxford,” 83). See also Robson, *Wyclif and the Oxford Schools*, which discusses the persistence of some of Wyclif’s works at Oxford.
- 84 William James seems just to have been the sort of Oxonian to find it wise to preach outside of the university. A fellow of Merton, he was said to have been implicated in the Wycliffite scandals of 1382, preaching on Wyclif’s eucharistic doctrine (see *FZ*, 307). He was not pursued by Courtenay at that time, but he does garner official notice in 1394, for reasons unknown, however. Hudson suggests he was suspected of heresy; see *Premature Reformation*, 89; see also Kightly, “Early Lollards,” 231. For a related, later example of this phenomenon (concerning Robert Lychelade), see Hudson, *Premature Reformation*, 89–91; Kightly, “Early Lollards,” 272.
- 85 On the continuing of Wycliffism at Oxford, see Hudson, *Premature Reformation*, 85–87, 101–03, and Robson, *Wyclif and the Oxford Schools*.
- 86 *London Literature*, 311. On the production of such texts at, and outside of, Oxford, see Hudson, “Wycliffism in Oxford,” 80–81.
- 87 For each case, see Kelly, “Trial Procedures Against Wyclif and Wycliffites.” On 11 July, Swynderby abjured eleven articles; see *FZ*, 334–40, and *Knighton’s Chronicle*, 320–23, for discrepancies between these final articles and those originally imputed to Swynderby. Note that this edited material differs from the register, which records eight errors and two heresies; see Lincoln reg. Buckingham, fols. 243v–244r.

- 88 This is Justice's wording ("Lollardy," 669), which pithily describes the irrelevant idea.
- 89 Richardson, "Heresy and the Lay Power," 7.
- 90 Wilks, "Royal Priesthood: the Origins of Lollardy," in *Wyclif: Political Ideas and Practice*, 104. A similar position is taken by Swanson, *Church and Society*, 338.
- 91 *England's Empty Throne*, 38. For the text of *De heretico comburendo*, see *Rotuli parliamentorum*, 3.466–67. McHardy suggests that portions of this document were written by an ecclesiast – perhaps even Courtenay's successor, Archbishop Arundel; see "*De Heretico Comburendo*, 1401," 118.
- 92 We might also bear in mind that Courtenay's "first encounter with academic heresy" was during "the process concerning Uthred Boldon in 1367–8" (*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 13.688).
- 93 Here I accept the general idea that "persecution can have the opposite effect and give publicity to dissenting minorities" (Hamilton, *Medieval Inquisition*, 57).
- 94 *Knighton's Chronicle*, 271, 270. See also the mandates from the archbishop and king, respectively, to the Chancellor of Oxford, *FZ*, 309–11, 312–14.
- 95 Warnings about persons "usurping the office of preacher" make perfect sense in earlier texts on the *forma praedicandi* written for preachers, such as Robert of Basevorn's; see *Forma Praedicandi*, 244 (here referencing "illiterati"). Here, however, I am simply noting that such objections are broadcast by Courtenay and then echoed by others.
- 96 Fol. 144r–v.
- 97 Fol. 102v; see also fol. 103r.
- 98 Fol. 103r–v; see also fols. 103v–104r, 104v–105r.
- 99 See respectively the edition in Hudson, "A Lollard Mass," in *Lollards and Their Books*, 120; and *Register of John Trefnant*, 386. On Ramsbury's mix of beliefs, see Kerby-Fulton, *Books under Suspicion*, 269–71.
- 100 Gower, "Carmen super multiplici viciorum pestilencia," in *Complete Works*, 4.347, lines 30, 34–35. The poet says the exact same thing about friars: "Vsurpando fidem vultum mentitur honestum / Caucius vt fraudem palleat ipse suam" (*ibid.*, 195 [4.22], lines 1043–44). For more on the fusions between antifraternial and anti-Wycliffite polemic, see Chapter 2.
- 101 *Rotuli parliamentorum*, 3.466.
- 102 Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, MS 4133, fol. 195v; see fol. 203r for Ullerston's reply to this charge. For another application of the phrase against women in particular, see Owst, *Literature and Pulpit*, 349.
- 103 *Middle English Translation of the Rosarium Theologie*, 91–92.

THE INVENTION OF "LOLLARDY":  
WILLIAM LANGLAND

- 1 For Skeat's remarks, see Langland, *Vision of William*, 2.60n2–61.
- 2 See Scase, *New Anticlericalism*, 147, 149–60; Middleton, "Acts of Vagrancy," 280–87.

- 3 Some widen the gulf between Langland and these heterodox contemporaries, arguing that the poet shows, in his revisions from B to C, an increased anxiety not only about heretical subjects but about retribution from censors on the look-out for offensive Wycliffite matter. See Bowers, “*Piers Plowman* and the Police,” 13; Kerby-Fulton, “Bibliographic Ego,” 75, “*Piers Plowman*,” 522, *Books under Suspicion*, 124, 375–78. Von Nolcken, in “*Piers Plowman*, The Wycliffites,” 78–82, finds great differences between Langland and the Wycliffites.
- 4 In Middle English, “lollare” is a widely attested form of “lollard.” Clopper, however, finds no Wycliffite significance to Langland’s “lollares” (“Langland’s Persona,” 158–59), a view that is consistent with his thesis that Langland engages with earlier Franciscan heresies and is unconcerned with Wycliffism (*ibid.*, 164–65). He elaborates on this idea in “*Songes of Rechelesnesse*,” 9, 33–34, 54, 66, 92, 103, 205, 208, 234, 320.
- 5 Gradon, “Ideology,” 197.
- 6 I cite the B text of *Piers Plowman* by passus and line from Kane and Donaldson’s Athlone edition. Lawrence Warner suggested to me that this reference to “lolleris” could have been interpolated into B from C. Given that, as he argues (“Ur-B *Piers Plowman*”), so much of that interpolation was transpiring in B.15, his account best explains “lolleris” in B.15.212–13. It is an explanation unknown to Gradon, of course. Hudson says of the B-text “lolleris” that “[i]ts sense seems unlikely to be the technical one of ‘follower of Wyclif’, not only because of the date of the B version but also from its apparent rough equivalence with ‘hermits’ and ‘anchorites’”. In the C text the word is more common. At some occurrences it would appear to mean much the same as the one case in B, a ‘religious eccentric’ at the most specific” (*Premature Reformation*, 407).
- 7 See Gradon, “Ideology,” 196n1, citing Crompton, who recounts the received etymology of the term (“Leicestershire Lollards,” 11). For the reference to Crumpe, see *FZ*, 311–12.
- 8 Gradon, “Ideology,” 196.
- 9 There is barely an echo of this word in his C text, “Et egenos *uagosque* induc in domum tuam [And bring the homeless and the poor into your house]” (9.125*a*, my emphasis); see 11.67*a*. The meaning here is obviously not pejorative. I cite the C text of *Piers Plowman* by passus and line from Russell and Kane’s Athlone edition; Latin translation by Pearsall, *C-Text*, 167n125*a*.
- 10 Bloomfield, “*Piers Plowman*” as a Fourteenth-Century Apocalypse; Szittyá, *Antifraternal Tradition*.
- 11 *New Anticlericalism*, 151–52.
- 12 *Ibid.*, 155; also see 150–51, 152. Scase underscores the difference between Langlandian and anti-Wycliffite senses of “loller,” and follows Gradon in assuming that Langland’s “lollers” in both B and C predate the anti-Wycliffite sense of the 1380s. Kerby-Fulton builds on Scase’s point, understanding that “Langland provides his own definition of the word in this new passage (C9.213–218), a word which he used without defining in the B-text, and which in C he defends (at least apparently) on the basis of a traditionally English



- usage ('As by þe Engelisch of oure eldres, of olde mennes techynge,' 214) – a point which suggests he is *now* aware of an alternative use ..." ("Bibliographic Ego," 102–03).
- 13 Hudson, *Premature Reformation*, 407.
  - 14 I first circulated these views in two papers: "Ben suche ycald lollares': The Problem of Representing Lollards and Friars," Southeast Medieval Association, 25–27, September 1997, Nashville, TN; and "Piers Plowman, C Text, and the Lollard Tradition," presented to the Lollard Society at the 34th International Congress on Medieval Studies, 6–9, May 1999.
  - 15 "Whatever the origin of the term *Lollard*, its first recorded use in England to refer to a definable religious sect occurred in 1382 when Henry Crumpe was suspended from academic acts in the university for calling the 'heretics' *Lollardi*" (Hudson, *Premature Reformation*, 2); see also Hanna, "Emendations," 190, and Kerby-Fulton, *Books under Suspicion*, xlii and 1119. I follow the consensus on the dates of Langland's versions, A (c. 1367–70) and B (c. 1377–79), established by Bennett, "Date of the A-text" and "Date of the B-Text." One could fairly question these dates, however, in view of Warner's recent work especially.
  - 16 See *FZ*, 289.
  - 17 See *ibid.*, 311–12; here 312.
  - 18 For Crumpe's future difficulties, see *FZ*, 343–49, 356–58.
  - 19 Crompton, "*Fasciculi Zizaniorum*," 164.
  - 20 For the entire account, see *FZ*, 296–300.
  - 21 Forde, "Nicholas Hereford's Ascension Day Sermon," 240. I follow Scase (*New Anticlericalism*, 152–53) on rendering the nouns of Hereford's sentence.
  - 22 See Scase, *New Anticlericalism*, 153–54, and her qualification: "Whether or not 'luridici' was chosen to stand for the English 'loller', its use by Frykes [the notary] certainly suggests that Hereford used the *loller* image with antifraternal implications" (153).
  - 23 In *Lollards and Their Influence in Late Medieval England*, edited by Somerset, Havens, and Pitard, Scase and I published pieces that, among other things, show how this entry cannot assign the earliest use of "lollard" to 1382 (see Scase, "'Heu! quanta desolatio Angliæ praestatur,'" 19–21; and Cole, "William Langland and the Invention of Lollardy," 40–41). Scase, however, still maintains that the term "lollard" was used in 1382 and reaffirms her earlier position in *New Anticlericalism* that Hereford's sermon can be construed as a reliable example (see 23). As Scase's premise about the early use of the term "lollard," and how it might pertain to Langland, remains the same, my criticism still applies.
  - 24 Hanna, "Emendations," 190.
  - 25 Perhaps the best example would be Wyclif, *Sermones*, 1.94–97. See also *Polemical Works*, 2.432; *De Blasphemia*, 72; *De Eucharistia*, 155; *Triologus*, 298–99. Semantic games are fully available to Wyclif; for instance, he plays on words in showing how heresy turns an "apostle" into an "apostate" (*De Potestate Pape*, 214). His earlier discussion of heresy is in *De Veritate Sacrae Scripturae*, 3.274–310.



- 26 See Lyndwood, *Provinciale*, 300; and the final sections of *FZ* (not edited by Shirley) in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS e Musaeo 86, fol. 119r, column b, where Wyclif's eucharistic heresies are called "lollardi," thus ending the chronicle where it begins, with a reference to the "lolti" of Wyclif (*FZ*, 1).
- 27 See *EWS*, 1.336, 374–75, 481, 617–18; 2.17, 50, 163, 286, 377. These sermons, according to Hudson and Gradon, date to "the late 1380s or 1390s, after the Despenser crusade but before the enactment of the *De heretico comburendo* in 1401" (*EWS*, 4.19) – sometime after 1383, in other words. Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 806, a partial redaction of the English Wycliffite sermon cycle (see *EWS*, 1.110–15), inserts a commentary on "lollards" where there was none in the original; see fols. 47v, 70v. Also, London, British Library, MS Egerton 2820, a recension of a Wycliffite text published in Matthew, *English Works of Wyclif*, 362–93, inserts a new commentary on "lollardis" (fol. 48r), "lollers" (fol. 48v).
- 28 Matthew, *English Works of Wyclif*, 191–92, 212.
- 29 See the Apocalypse commentary, *Opus Arduum*, in Brno University Library, MS Mk 28. Fols. 136v, 157v refer to the persecutions of "Lolardi." The text is "firmly dated," as Hudson puts it, to 1389–90; see "A Neglected Wycliffite Text," in her *Lollards and Their Books*, 44–45, 64 and n9, 65; see *Premature Reformation*, 157. We can also note that the Carmelite Richard Maidstone, in his *Determinacio contra Johannem*, associated the views of his opponent, John Ashwardby, "with those *qui sunt de secta lollardorum*" (*ibid.*, 96). Edden dates Maidstone's text between 1384 and 1392 ("Debate," 114–15). Based on the foregoing arguments, however, one could date Maidstone's text later; Crompton dated the work to around 1392 (see "*Fasciculi Zizaniorum*," 157).
- 30 See *Epistola Sathanae (or Luciferi) ad Cleros*, in *Selections*; Hunt, "Edition of Tracts," 2.239.
- 31 *FZ*, 272, my emphasis.
- 32 *FZ*, 312.
- 33 The *Continuatio Eulogii* reports of the year 1381: "Magistri tamen omnes in theologia regentes Oxoniæ determinabant contra hanc doctrinam, et præcipue regens Fratrum Minorum hanc doctrinam redarguit potenter et ipsos Lollardos esse probavit [all the master regents in theology of Oxford determined against this doctrine and especially the regent of the Order of Friars Minor who powerfully refuted it and pronounced those preachers to be Lollards]" (351). This seems to be a reference to William Barton's council at Oxford, which found two teachings by Wyclif to be "erroneous" (see *FZ*, 110–13), not heretical, as some modern scholars claim.
- 34 *Concilia*, 3.202–03.
- 35 See *Calendar of the Register of Henry Wakefield*, xx–xxiii; 131–32 [item 776 (fols. 112v–113r)]; this item is dated at "Courtenay family home at Exminster in Devon" (xxi).
- 36 *Concilia*, 3.203.
- 37 Wakefield's mandate is a "reissue with minor alterations of a mandate of the archbishop of 30 May 1382" (*Calendar of the Register of Henry Wakefield*, xxi),

as contained in *Concilia*, 3.158–59. There is no mention of “lollards” in this Courtenay document.

38 See McFarlane’s reading of this document, in *John Wycliffe*, 113.

39 See Hudson, *Premature Reformation*, 73–76.

40 *Concilia*, 3.172.

41 For other uses of the term in primary documents that could affect the fashioning of historical narratives, see *Concilia*, 3.208–09, 210, 211, 221 (in which embedded are the “Twelve Conclusions”). Some ecclesiastical documents show a rather extensive use of the word; see *ibid.*, 3.225, and especially, *Metropolitan Visitations*, 165–66.

42 See Barr, *Signes and Sothe*, and Lawton, “Lollardy and the ‘Piers Plowman’ Tradition.”

43 *Piers Plowman Tradition*, cited by line.

44 I follow Barr’s reading of these lines: “‘folowid’ and ‘shewed’ (*Piers Plowman Tradition*, 418) are used in their legal senses, to prosecute a case at law ... and to lodge a plea before the court” (311n416–22).

45 For this view, see Workman, *John Wyclif*, 2.253; Gwynn, *Austin Friars*, 239; Szittyá, *Antifraternal Tradition*, 152; see, finally, Hudson’s assessment in *Premature Reformation*, 348–49.

46 See Leff, *Heresy*, 1.315–47; McDonnell, *Beguines and Beghards*, 246, 266–67; Scase, *New Anticlericalism*, 138; see 132, 135, 138, 141–42, 145–47, 151–54.

47 Scase supplies a rich account of antifraternalism in its continental contexts and understands that “lollard” has historically antifraternal implications. Her primary *English evidence* on this point, however, is the entry on Crumpe in *FZ* and Hereford’s sermon (*New Anticlericalism*, 152–55). For Scase, this evidence supports a thesis that, in addition to Langland, others in the early 1380s embraced a non-Wycliffite sense of the word “loller,” before consensus in the later 1380s suppressed that sense in favor of “follower of Wyclif.” Yet as I show, both instances are not indicators about uses of “lollardy” in 1382. Scase produces no other examples, and so we have no choice but to see Langland’s “lollares” as responsive to contemporary “lollare [lollard]” issues.

48 *Calendar of the Patent Rolls: Richard II*, 3.386, 3.324. Walsingham, *Historia Anglicana*, 2.157–59; *Historia Vitae*, 102–04; *Polychronicon*, 8.479–80 (for Trevisa’s rendering).

49 *Calendar of the Patent Rolls: Richard II*, 3.324, for writs dated 28 May and 18 July 1387, concerning the apostasy of Robert Stokulse. See Logan, *Runaway Religious*, 74, regarding a citation for Thomas Beauchamp and John Lude, possibly Wycliffite sympathizers. Logan’s claim that “only once does heresy or near-heresy appear connected with apostasy from the religious life” (74) is based on statistical data of known cases and overlooks the figurations of apostasy and heresy in historical, literary, theological, and polemic writing, in which the sentiments and problems become greatly amplified and duly disseminated.

50 *Calendar of the Patent Rolls: Richard II*, 3.551. For related issues on fraternal apostasy, see Clopper, “*Songes of Rechelesnesse*”, 44–46.

51 *Knighton’s Chronicle*, 249.

- 52 *Three Middle English Sermons*, 60. On this sermon collection, see Wenzel, *Latin Sermon Collections*, 151–58.
- 53 *Three Middle English Sermons*, 66.
- 54 All are motifs discussed by Szittyá, *Antifraternal Tradition*.
- 55 He does, however, seem to refer to a certain Wycliffite: “For þer was a lollard at Oxfanfort but awhile agon þat forsuk al his errours & al his misleuyng & turnyd aȝen to þe leuyng of oþer good cristenmen, & tan a told certeyn rytes & doying of hem, 3e, so cursed & so oreble to her” (*Three Middle English Sermons*, 65). Grisdale believes that this passage refers to Hereford (*ibid.*, xxiii); it could just as well be to Repingdon, however. We shall return to this issue in Chapter 7; in any case, the preacher eschews a discussion of these “certeyn rytes” – “e good feyth, ich am greuyse for to telle hem.”
- 56 *Knighton’s Chronicle*, 299. See Walsingham, *Historia*, 1.324–26. Clopper identifies russet as patently fraternal; see “*Songes of Rechelesnesse*”, 195. As a fraternal narrator says:

Than thei loken on my nabete,  
And sein, “Forsothe withoutton othes,  
Whether it be russet, blakk, or white,  
It is worthe alle oure werynge clothes.”

- (“Allas, What Schul We Freris Do,” in *Medieval English Political Writings*, 57, lines 21–24)
- 57 *Chronicon Angliae*, 116; for an aspersion against the fraternal orders, see 312, and *Historia Anglicana*, 2.13.
- 58 *Historia Anglicana*, 2.53 (see also 1.356). Unbeneficed priests are at issue, too. Walsingham mentions that “[i]nter quos [among them]” there was a certain one (William Swynderby) who had the look and dress of a hermit (2.53). For a discussion of Swynderby, see Chapter 1.
- 59 The Wycliffites see apostasy as a sign that there may be friars sympathetic to their cause: “For ȝif a prest of her feyned ordre wole lyue poreli & iustly & goo freli aboute & teche frely goddis lawes, þei holden him apostata & prison hym, & holden hym cursed for þis prestis lif commaundid, ensaumplid of crist & his apostlis” (Matthew, *English Works of Wyclif*, 127). Interestingly, Matthew references here Patteshulle and other fraternal Wycliffite sympathizers (see 507n127).
- 60 *Continuatio Eulogii*, 355. Clearly, “sermones fratrum congregaverunt” could be rendered, “they gathered together the sermons of [their] brothers” – a translation that might draw attention to Wycliffite communities of textual production. I offer my translation for two reasons. The first is that this Franciscan compiler is aware, more than others, of Wycliffite attempts to appropriate from the friars. The second is that there were such textual exchanges between the Wycliffites and friars, from the latter to the former especially. Some mendicants, after 1387, had access to the networks of production and circulation enjoyed by Wycliffites, as Hudson and Helen Spencer have shown; see their “Old Author, New Work.” See also Hudson,

“The Expurgation of a Lollard Sermon Cycle,” in *Lollards and Their Books*, 206, 211–12, and Spencer, *English Preaching*, 318–20. Friars adopted portions of the Wycliffite sermon cycle, expunging matters that would naturally be offensive, such as the ubiquitous impugning of the orders. One can also look at anecdotes in, for instance, Richard Stormworth’s petition to the king in 1392, which observes that the Mayor of Northampton was advised by a “one Nicholas Weston a fryer Carmilett apostate and Lollard, without the license of his order” (*Peasants’ Rising and the Lollards*, 46). There is also Thomas Brampton, a Franciscan, whose translation of the seven penitential psalms is “pro-Lollard in its sentiments”; see Connolly, *John Shirley*, 87; referencing, in part, Kuczynski, *Prophetic Song*, 124–35, 260–62. There is also the case of William Russell, a minorite: “Yet the orders were not always models of orthodoxy, for Fr. Thomas Winchelsey, one of the assessors at the Taylor trial, was made to answer by convocation to the charge of receiving back, at the London Franciscan Convent, a heretical minorite, William Russell, who had maintained publicly that the payment of personal tithes to clerks with cure of souls was not enjoined by the divine law and that they might be applied to works of piety and mercy instead” (Jacob, *Fifteenth Century*, 298). More recently, see Robertson, “Tithe-Heresy.” For the text of the proceedings against this friar, see *Concilia*, 3.438–59. For yet another example of a Franciscan (John Bettenham) assisting Wycliffites, see McFarlane, *John Wycliffe*, 173.

61 *Continuatio Eulogii*, 412.

62 See *Concilia*, 3.324.

63 *Rotuli parliamentorum*, 3.124; see also *Calendar of the Patent Rolls: Richard II*, 3.200 (see also 3.145, 146). In his assessment of the “lunatyk lollares,” Clopper also broadens the interpretation of this statute; see “*Songes of Rechelesnesse*”, 209–10. I read Langland’s bad “lollares” in light of this and other enactments.

64 On these problems with friars more generally, see Kedar, “Canon Law and Local Practice”; Szittyá, *Antifraternal Tradition*, 63, 101–12, 123–51; Clopper, “*Songes of Rechelesnesse*”, 44–45.

65 Wakefield was among those bishops “not as well inclined towards friars” (Williams, “Relations,” 52; see also 53).

66 Or Langland introduces here the C-text “lollare” into B, as I suggest above in reference to Warner’s work on the ur-B version of the poem; see note 6. Most critics understand C to be finished by 1387, when Thomas Usk, before his execution in 1388, referenced the C version of the Tree of Charity in his *Testament of Love* (cf. Bowers, “Dating *Piers Plouman*”). Middleton dates C to after 1388 (see “Acts of Vagrancy,” 208–09). On Langland’s dialect, see Samuels, “Langland’s Dialect”; and Doyle and Parkes’s remarks on the D-Scribe from southwest Worcestershire in “Production of Copies,” 174–82, 192–97. Horobin, however, in “In London and opelond,” demonstrates (against Samuels) that five C manuscripts in the i-group were written in London, casting doubt on the idea that Langland retreated from the city to a more rural location.

67 In Chapter 3, I discuss why these lines are contained in the pardon; see 69.

68 Latin translation is from Pearsall’s edition, *C-Text*, 170n212a.

- 69 Scase proposes that the passage be repunctuated, with the effect being that here Langland is not stating that “lollare” is an “old word” but rather new; only the verb, “lollen,” is claimed to be old (*New Anticlericalism*, 151).
- 70 Fol. 48v. See also *Selections*, 19.
- 71 FZ, 312. See Walsingham, *Historia*, 2.157; *Continuatio Eulogii*, 351.
- 72 As Scase notes, this practice “is usually only for the Latin quotations in this manuscript” (*New Anticlericalism*, 157).
- 73 For Gratian’s definition of heresy, see Decretum II Cxxiv Qiii cc. 27–31, in *Corpus Iuris Canonici*, 1.997–98; another source is Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiarum*, 8.3–8.5, no pagination. Lyndwood provides a thorough catalogue of definitions of heresy drawn, of course, from various portions of canon law; see “De hæreticis,” in *Provinciale*, 289–90, 292–93. English writers generally speak of heretics as working against the laws of the church and scripture, which together comprise “the faith.” An orthodox preacher, for example, refers to “þe lawe canon ... de hereticis”: “But I prey þe, what is heresy? For-sothe, not else but for to preche and liff a3eyns þe fey3the and good maner” (*Middle English Sermons*, 210). Langland generalizes in a similar fashion. His Latin lines seem to approximate those of Tertullian: “haereses dictae graeca voce ex interpretatione electionis, qua quis maxime ad instituendas, sive ad suscipiendas eas utitur. Ideo et sibi damnatum [Paulus] dixit haereticum, quia in quo damnatur sibi elegit. Nobis vero nihil ex nostro arbitrio indulgere licet, sed nec eligere quod aliquis de arbitrio suo induxerit [They are called by the Greek word *haireseis* in the sense of choice ... Therefore [Paul] has called the heretic damned [condemned] by himself because he has chosen for himself [something] for which he is damned. For us it is not lawful to introduce any doctrine of our own choosing, neither may we choose some doctrine which someone else has introduced by his own choice]” (Tertullian, *De Praescriptione Haereticorum*, 12–14). Alford suggests that sources involving the violation of monastic rules are relevant to Langland’s Latin lines; see his *Guide to the Quotations*, 55–56.
- 74 Gradon’s view “that the *lollers* are not heretics” is untenable (“Ideology,” 196).
- 75 Cf. Kerby-Fulton, “Bibliographic Ego,” 102–03.
- 76 On Will “yclouthed as a lollare” in C5, see Chapter 3, 66–70.
- 77 Clopper concludes similarly about fraternal “lollares” (“*Songes of Rechelesnesse*”, 204–08), but does not account for the relevant context – that of “lollare” discourse and Wycliffite and anti-Wycliffite controversies.
- 78 For more on these figures, see Aers, *Sanctifying Signs*, 109–10, 218n30.
- 79 As Russell and Kane report, an alternative reading for “lorelles” in line 101 is “lollares.”
- 80 Clopper perceptively points to these distinctions regarding the issue of imitation (“*Songes of Rechelesnesse*”, 204).
- 81 Interestingly enough, a contemporary poem makes a somewhat similar point:

When beggers mow nether bake ne brewē,  
Ne have wherwith to borrow ne bie,

Than mot riot robbe or reve,  
Under the colour of Lollardie.

- (“Lo, He That Can Be Cristes Clerc,” in *Medieval English Political Writings*, 94, lines 61–64).
- 82 See San Marino, Huntington Library, MS HM 143, fol. 41r; annotation to line 9.140, “propure lollares,” is transcribed by Scase, *New Anticlericalism*, 157.
  - 83 On the friars’ “fyndynge,” see Aers, *Sanctifying Signs*, 156.
  - 84 See Hanna, “‘Meddling with Makings,’” 86n5; Jones, “Langland and Hermits,” 79–80; Clopper, “*Songes of Rechelesnesse*,” 205–06. See also Godden, “Plowmen and Hermits,” 137–39. On Austin hermits, Roth, *English Austin Friars*; Mathes, *Poverty Movement*.
  - 85 He expands the common criticism of the laity adopting fraternal garb (for, among other things, burial), a practice for which friars are to blame as much as lay persons. See Wyclif, *Polemical Works*, 1.35, 143, 306, 381; *De Blasphemia*, 209; *Opera Minora*, 322; “Jack Upland,” in *Jack Upland*, 63, lines 204–08; Williams, “Relations,” 64. Wycliffites, with extreme frequency, criticize the fraternal habit; see Matthew, *English Works of Wyclif*, 316; and: “Fferþermor we shal suppose þat bodyliche abyte, or wantyng þerof, makip not men religiose neyper apostataes, al 3if þey semen siche bi jugement of men; for oonliche charite þat sewip it makip men religiose, or of Cristis ordre” (Arnold, *Select English Works*, 431).
  - 86 See Matthew, *English Works of Wyclif*, 51. On Langland’s wasters, see Aers, *Chaucer, Langland*, 9–20, and *Community, Gender*, 20–72.
  - 87 Lyndwood identifies regular disobedience (“inobedientiae”) as one of three forms of apostasy; see *Provinciale*, 306. See also the Wycliffite comment on “obedience,” Arnold, *Select English Works*, 449.
  - 88 On “lewd hermits” and labor, see Hanna, “‘Meddling with Makings,’” 86n5, and Jones, “Langland and Hermits,” 78–79.
  - 89 In my view, Langland refers to “hermits” in order to produce an (anti) fraternal discourse about failed pristine aspirations. He sees friars as the progenitors of eremitic practices, according to the legends of the Austin friars:

Paul *primus heremita* hadde yparroked hymselfe  
That no man myhte se hym for moes and for leues.  
Foules hym fedde yf frere Austynes be trewe  
For he ordeyned þat ordre or elles þey gabben. (C.17.13–16)

The entire passage (17.6–36) featuring desert eremiticism ends with a lesson about those desiring, or having, property: “For wolde neuere faythfull god þat freres and monkes / Toke lyfode of luyther wynnynge in all her lyf tyme” (17.35–36). These passages can be paired with 9.196–203, where holy “hermits” forefront a fraternal ideal that then goes wrong in the figure of the “lewede Eremite,” a friar himself, a “lollare.” For a defense of the fraternal life using similar hermetic ideals, see “Friar Daw’s Reply,” in *Jack Upland*, 82–83, lines 282–321.

- 90 Jones (“Langland and Hermits,” 78) suggests, as well, that these lines refer to “the abuses” listed in 9.188a–212a, those of “Thise lollares, lachedrawerres, lewede Ermytes” (192).
- 91 Pearsall identifies this scriptural verse in his edition, *C-Text*, 171n257–58.
- 92 For the canonical provision to remove a remiss bishop who “tolerates” heresy, see *Corpus Iuris Canonici*, 2.789.
- 93 *Knighton’s Chronicle*, 265. Compare the following Wycliffite comment to Langland: “And so siche prelatys shulden be Cristis houndis, and berke bi his lawe, and not bi lawe of wolves. Lord! what lettiþ þise houndis to berke, and lede Cristis sheep aftir his lawe? Certis it semeþ þat dowyng of þe Chirche, and too myche worshyppynge of Antecristis lawe; for a lumpe of talowe strangliþ þe houndis, and lettiþ hem boþe to berke and to byte” (Arnold, *Select English Works*, 440). The image comes from Isaiah 56.10: “Ande Ysaie sais, þat suche bene doumbe houndus þat may not berken” (*ibid.*, 469). Another Wycliffite writes: “Pus prelatys & freris in þise daies ben trauelid wiþ þis synne aȝen þe Holi Goost & schamfulli sclaudren her symple briþren ... Pus han þey brouȝt her malice aboute to sclaudir for Lollardis ... but certis þey ben not worþi Crist þat stonyen for barkyng of þise houndis for noon is worþi to be wiþ þis Lord” (*Lanterne of Liȝt*, 11).
- 94 We might think here of Peter Stokes, Archbishop Courtenay’s man who regularly reported on the Wycliffite happenings in Oxford; he was known as the “white dog” (Knowles, *Religious Orders*, 2.72, 145n3). The canine motif is common enough, however. Wyclif called his monastic opponent, John Wells, a “black dog” (*Sermones*, 3.246; on Wells, see FZ, 239). He also refers to bishops as dogs (*Sermones*, 2.196, 4.502–03).
- 95 See Wyclif, *De Veritate Sacrae Scripturae*, 305–06; for Wycliffite examples, see Matthew, *English Works of Wyclif*, 299–300, 313.

THE REINVENTION OF “LOLLARDY”: WILLIAM  
LANGLAND AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES

- 1 At least, they did not know what an English “lollard” was. For an article that discusses the very few continental usages of this term whose meaning was, on account of differing contexts and problems, quite different from those I discuss, see Kurze, “Die festländischen Lollarden,” 53–58.
- 2 Hudson supports this particular claim, which I made in a shorter version of this chapter in a special section of the *Yearbook of Langland Studies* I organized, “Langland and Lollardy.” See her reply, “Langland and Lollardy?” 98.
- 3 On these processes of appropriation, as they apply to the Wycliffites’ handling of the hostile term “lollard,” see Barr, *Signes and Sothe*.
- 4 Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 703, fol. 66r, see also fols. 1r, 41r, 57r, 59r.
- 5 “Testimony,” 34.
- 6 Mirk writes: “And þerfor roodes and oþyr ymages ben necessary in holy chirch, whateuer þes Lollardes sayn” (*Mirk’s Festial*, 171). For a relevant treatment of Mirk, see Fletcher, “John Mirk and the Lollards,” and Powell,



- “Lollards and Lombards.” See also the assorted comments about “lollard” views in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 649, fols. 35r, 43v, 100r, 101v. The Wycliffite “Sixteen Points” shows that the naming of “lollards” calls for predicating the term upon points of foul doctrine: “Þes ben þe poyntis wiche ben putte be bischoppis ordinaris vpon men wiche þei clepen Lollardis” (*Selections*, 19). Wenzel’s *Latin Sermon Collections* contains more examples of this orthodox method (372, 373, 384). Hornbeck rightly observes that some reformist sermons do not itemize points of belief (“Lollard Sermons?” 27).
- 7 The author of a commentary on the Apocalypse in Brno University Library, MS Mk 28, protests the persecutions of “Lolardi” (fols. 136v, 157v); see Hudson, “A Neglected Wycliffite Text,” in *Lollards and Their Books*, 44–45, 64 and n9, 65.
  - 8 The incipit reads: “A dialogue as hit were of a wyse man and of a fole denyinge þe trweþe wiþ fablis.” Hudson dates the manuscript to the fifteenth century (*Selections*, 189); Hunt, to the early fifteenth century (“Edition of Tracts,” 1.75–78). These are the dates of compilation (not composition) of texts that are, as Hudson says, “without a common author” (“John Purvey: A Reconsideration of the Evidence,” in *Lollards and Their Books*, 107). The internal evidence, including the supposed references to Arundel’s Constitutions of 1407/09, is ambiguous, as Hunt acknowledges (1.75–78), and thus not helpful in dating the texts individually.
  - 9 Fol. 58v; Hunt, 2.338.
  - 10 There is no standard Wycliffite antifraternalism in this tract, just the implication that the “fole” is a friar. The “fole” is addressed as “broþer” but also “Frende” (355); the “wyse man” as “Syr.” The wiseman tells the “fole” that he is “of þe noumber of saducees þat seien þere is no resurreccioun” (353).
  - 11 Fol. 59r–v; Hunt, 2.338–39.
  - 12 Fols. 59v–60r; Hunt, 2.339.
  - 13 Fol. 60r–v; Hunt, 2.339.
  - 14 Fol. 60v; Hunt, 2.340.
  - 15 Fol. 61r; Hunt, 2.340.
  - 16 Fols. 61v–62r; Hunt, 2.341.
  - 17 Fols. 61v–62r; Hunt, 2.341.
  - 18 The editor, Scattergood, writes: “*The Two Ways* is not so much a Lollard tract as a treatise which shows some sympathy with Lollard positions. It is not doctrinally polemical: it attacks neither the tenets nor the organisation of the mediæval Church. It has nothing to say about papal or priestly authority, the necessity for Church endowment, the validity of confession, or the use of pilgrimages, indulgences or images. The controversial doctrine of the real presence is never mentioned” (*Works*, 19); for further comment, see Hudson, *Premature Reformation*, 422–23. I refer to this text by line number. On the manuscripts of *The Two Ways* (Oxford, University College, MS 97, and London, British Library, MS Additional 22283), see Scattergood, in Clanvowe, *Works*, 21. Unfortunately only lines 770–870 survive in Additional 22283. Given that Clanvowe died in 1391, we might assume that he wrote this work in the mid-to late 1380s.



- 19 He expatiates repeatedly against the “richesse of this world,” “lustes,” wasting and ostentatious spending and display; see *Works*, from which I cite *The Two Ways* by line number: 168, 223, 434–84, 441–70, 386–433.
- 20 *Ibid.*, 306–07, 353–54.
- 21 *Ibid.*, 388–484.
- 22 *Ibid.*, 199.
- 23 *Ibid.*, 503–23.
- 24 See Arnold, *Select English Works*, 265.
- 25 *Works*, 717–96, 730–31.
- 26 See *Fyve Wyttes*, 2, 29, 17.
- 27 *Ibid.*, 25–26, 9.
- 28 *Ibid.*, 19; see 15 for an affirmation of the traditional doctrine of the eucharist. Bremmer writes that the manuscript in which this text appears, London, British Library, MS Harley 2398, is “mainly intended for (secular) priests or the interested, educated layman” (xxi); “most likely the author was not a layman but a priest” (xxiv). Based on a preliminary linguistic analysis, Bremmer proposes the date of the text to be “about 1400,” perhaps no later than “the turn of the fourteenth century” (lxxiii).
- 29 See fols. 59v–60r; Hunt, 2.339.
- 30 *Fyve Wyttes*, 19.
- 31 Compare to what an orthodox Worcester preacher says about “lollardes”: “Truliche rith tus it farith be þem, as long as tei teche wel, as long as tei preche þe rihtful lawes of holichirche & discorde nat e þe faith vrom oþer good cristynmen, so longe þei make a meri melodie e þe symple peples heryng” (*Three Middle English Sermons*, 41). This preacher is otherwise hostile to “lollardes” feigning “mekenes & holi leuyng” (66). Grisdale dates these sermons between 1389 and 1404 (*Three Middle English Sermons*, xxiii).
- 32 Fol. 48v.
- 33 What especially troubles the Worcester preacher, however, is that “fals techers as lollardes & swich oþer þat be now a-daies þat be takyn vor cristen men” (*Three Middle English Sermons*, 41); he imagines parishioners listening to “lollards” and expressing interest. The author of some anti-Wycliffite sermons in London, British Library, MS Harley 2268, agrees, writing that “mekyll pepyll of sympyll crystyn men and wemen wenyng and supposyng þame crystis own discipelys but sorrowfully vnderyneth þai sla þem 3a both body and sawle thorow þer venom” (fol. 195r).
- 34 Bremmer writes: “In conclusion, therefore, everything seems to point to the author of the *Fyve Wyttes* belonging to the orthodox mainstream of the Church wherever doctrine is involved. In his attitude towards the *gostly soueraynes*, that is, the ecclesiastical hierarchy, he is more radical, while his admission that Lollards might ‘preche trewely Crist and his gospel’ is in Dr Anne Hudson’s experience (private communication) ‘a remarkable gesture, and betrays a tolerance beyond the norm for virtue’” (*Fyve Wyttes*, xxxiii).
- 35 *Fyve Wyttes*, 19.

- 36 *Selections*, 182. And, as Hudson also notes, written at “a date early in the movement,” “before or about 1400” (*Selections*, 182). A Wycliffite, Latin *Epistola* is also in Trefnant’s register but does not take up the issue of “lollers”; see *Register of John Trefnant*, 401–05. Only the compiler’s heading under the year 1393 mentions “lollards”: “Sequitur littera per Lollardos contra viros ecclesiasticos” (401).
- 37 *Selections*, 89.
- 38 *Ibid.*
- 39 Hudson, *Selections*, 121; Matthew, *English Works of Wyclif*, 299; see Arnold, *Select English Works*, 304.
- 40 The author asserts that “Dominick and Frances” had aspired to “lyve a poor lyf in mekenes aftur Crist and his apostles by teachyng of þe gospell. And so þei gaderyd togeþer in dyuerse places brothern to lyue by mans almes wipowt beggery” (91), but that Satan and his students, so the story goes, succeeded in corrupting their Christian project by faking it.
- 41 On these topics within the Franciscan order, see Leff, *Heresy*, 1.51–166.
- 42 *Selections*, 92–93.
- 43 Wyclif’s relation to the friars is complex. He fundamentally agreed with Austins about *dominium* and the luxuries of the *possessio[n]ati*. In 1371 in parliament, for instance, he and two Austins asserted the right of the secular arm to collect taxes from the prelacy to finance wars with France. And when such joint political efforts were invisible, they kept mediated alliances through a sharing of such important intellectual sources as Giles of Rome. Indeed, for Wyclif, the intellectual connection would outlast the political one. See Gwynn, *English Austin Friars*, 212–14, 59–61; Wilks, *Problem of Sovereignty*, 59, 177–83.
- 44 These reflections supplement Wilks’s analysis of how Wyclif’s “own order was deliberately modelled on the friars” (“Wyclif and the Great Persecution,” in *Wyclif: Political Ideas and Practice*, 197; see 73–75, 108–09, 183–87, 197–99).
- 45 See Aston, “‘CAIM’s Castles’: Poverty, Politics, and Disendowment,” in *Faith and Fire*, 95–132.
- 46 *De Apostasia*, 44; see also 11, 23, 31, 32, 42. Wyclif also uses the tag, “dearest sons of God,” to deplore contemporary examples of Minorite mendicancy; see *Sermones*, 3.162–63. He also complains about friars imprisoning and killing friars sympathetic to his program or critical of contemporary fraternal practices. See *De Eucharistia* (dated 1380 by Thomson, *Latin Writings*, 67): “Secundo quod illi prelati religionum qui in suis capitulis accusant precipue fratres suos, quia predicant in patria quod sacramentum altaris nec est corpus Christi nec sanguis, sed efficax eius signum [Second: that (there are) those religious prelates who in their palaces blame especially their brothers, who preach in the land that the sacrament of the altar is neither the body nor blood of Christ, but is the efficacious sign of him]” (183). See also *De fundatione sectarum* (late 1383), in *Polemical Works*, 1.40, 51; *De prelati[s] contencionum sive de incarcerationis fidelibus*, in *Opera Minora*, 95 (not listed in Thomson, *Latin Writings*); *Sermones*, 2.83.
- 47 *Triologus*, 39.

- 48 After a section of material consisting of a point by point attack on the friars, Wyclif ends by noting: “Quidam tamen eorum videntur esse boni et plures habent a Deo naturale ingenium et multa spiritualia dona Dei, si non a veneno patris sui et cathena sui ordinis sint infecti, ut doctor Carmelitarum quem alloquor [However, certain of those friars seem to be good and many have from God a natural genius and numerous spiritual gifts of God, if they are not infected by the poison of their father and the chains of their order, as a doctor of the Carmelites says of them]” (*Sermones*, 3.223, 224). Who would that doctor be? Also see Wyclif’s remark about a Franciscan in *Opus Evangelicum*, 1.37.
- 49 *Dialogus*, 349. See also *Opus Evangelicum*, 1.410, 414.
- 50 *Trialogus*, 341–43, contains a clear passage, with reference to Paul, on friars who are strong beggars and shun work.
- 51 Matthew, *English Works of Wyclif*, 127.
- 52 See *Sermones*, 2.359. In *De Civili Dominio*, Wyclif articulated a program of apostolic poverty that was conscientiously conducive to present fraternal (not monastic) practices; see *De Civili Dominio*, 1.4, 3.6, 8, 12–13, 57–58, 350 (and next note); also see *De Blasphemia*, 219. Cf. *Trialogus*, 361–65, critical of the founding ideals of the orders.
- 53 See *Concilia*, 2.45. Fitzralph would say “pore [parish] prestes” are sufficient without friars; see *Defensio Curatorum*, 65. In speaking of ideal pastoral practices, Wyclif often emphasizes what should not be done; see, for instance, *Sermones*, 2.268–69. On the practices, knowledges, and virtues required of these poor priests (and reformed prelates), see *De Civili Dominio*, 3.150–51; *Sermones*, 4.262–71, 271–75, 292–96, 423–24; *Polemical Works*, 1.116–17, 126 [(cf. *Sermones*, 4.436–50)]; *Opera Minora*, 7, 74–75; *Opus Evangelicum*, 1.92, 375–76, 2.36. Orthodox requirements for pastoral knowledge are collected in Mirk, *Instructions for Parish Priests*.
- 54 Wyclif’s followers construed the figure to replace altogether “chaounouns, munkes, and freris”: “Ffor chaounouns, munkes, and freris schulden noȝt þen have stonden in sted, bot few pore prestis schulde have sufficid to þo Chirche by pure Cristis lawe” (Arnold, *Select English Works*, 3.418). On the labor of poor priests as distinct from that of friars, see *Dialogus*, 51–53; also 10, 15, 24, 79, 80. Wyclif’s discussion of evangelical poverty in *De Civili Dominio* is particularly rich; see 3.10–11, 51–53, 60, 77–88, 89–108, 108–24, 162, 172. Also see *Opera Minora*, 19, 33; *Polemical Works*, 2.431; *Sermones*, 1.339, 3.73–76. On matters of preaching and licensing, Wyclif frequently contrasts “poor,” “simple,” or “faithful” priests with friars: “Ipsi [simplices sacerdotes] predicant pure and libere legem Christi. Sed fratres predicant verba ficta et poemata ritmizata [the actual simple priests preach purely and freely the law of Christ. But friars preach fictitious words and rhyming poems]” (*Opera Minora*, 447; see *Sermones*, 1.289). Wyclif also notes the friars will be licensed by bishops to preach heresy whereas a “faithful priest” will be denied access to the diocese (*Polemical*, 2.424–25; *Opera Minora*, 77). Wyclif comprehensively reevaluates fraternal practices, even the name “friar,” in *De Blasphemia*, 219–238.

- 55 Matthew, *English Works of Wyclif*, 127 (as noted above). Matthew titles this tract “Of Clerk Possessioners.” This statement is directed at monks, but it could equally well apply to friars, for which there is record of such events. Interestingly, Matthew references here Patteshulle and other fraternal Wycliffite sympathizers (see 507n127). Also see “Prest, Ne Monke, Ne Yit Canoun,” in which the speaker claims to have abandoned his order when he was a novice, thus exonerating him from accusations of apostasy (*Medieval English Political Writings*, 52, lines 169–76 and the editor’s note to line 171).
- 56 Arnold, *Select English Works*, 368.
- 57 Clopper suggests that “some texts that have been ascribed to Lollards may attest to Franciscan rigorist rhetoric in England” (“Franciscans, Lollards,” 177).
- 58 *Tractatus De Pseudo-Freris*, in Matthew, *English Works of Wyclif*, 297, 298. Other citations broaden the picture of Wycliffite allegiances with friars or of Wycliffite encomia of fraternal practices: “Also bisiden rome frere menours bi false name pursuen trewe pore freris to deþ, for as myche as þei wolden kepe fraunseis reule to þe lettre in pouert & mekenesse & in grete penaunce, & þerfore, þou3 þei haue name of franseis freris, þei ben enemys of crist & fraunseis & cruel man-sleeris” (51); “3if þei pursuen to þe deþ pore freris serabitis, þat kepen fraunseis reule and testament to þe riȝt vndyrstondynge and wille of fraunceis wiþ outen glose of antecristis clerkis” (12); “Freris and prestis schulden preche þre poyntes” (Arnold, *Select English Works*, 240) – implying that friars are capable of preaching correct doctrine. Also see the reference to Grosseteste and “trewe Menourys” (*ibid.*, 489).
- 59 Of course, Wycliffites and Wyclif both reserve the right to test friars. Wyclif writes: “Et si dicatur quod temporales domini debent illis credere tanquam sanctoribus militantis ecclesiae, dico cum apostolo, quod non credant nimis facilliter omni spiritui; sed debent examinare eos si ex Deo sunt, quod seculari satis facile, cum facilliter possit a fratre quaerere ex testimonio totius sectae suae cum sigillo suo communi, quid sit hostia consecrata [If it is said that temporal lords must believe them (friars) as the more holy members of the church militant, I declare with the apostle that temporal lords should not too easily believe every spirit but rather (that) they ought to test them, whether they are of God, which a secular man may easily accomplish, since he might simply ask from a friar, on the testimony of his whole sect, under their common seal, what the sacred host is]” (*Trialogus*, 383). A Wycliffite writes: “And for freris and oþer religious ben suspect in þis [Eucharistic] heresye, men schulden not comyne wiþ hom bifore þei schewid þo fayth by sufficent wittenes, and with a wyse asker” (Arnold, *Select English Works*, 428).
- 60 See Fitzralph, *Defensio Curatorum*, 60, 64–71, 73, 89–93; concerning papal decrees 49–50, 53.
- 61 In this paragraph, I am recasting Dawson’s apt remark stated above – “weapons changed hands easily in the confused controversies of the fourteenth century and none more easily than the Franciscan theory of property. It was a versatile weapon because it could readily be used against any form of ecclesiastical privilege” (“Richard Fitzralph,” 343) – as well as Scase’s important conclusions

about how Fitzralph and others employ a new anticlericalism by which fraternal ideals are turned against the friars themselves (*New Anticlericalism*, 52, 56–57).

62 *Dialogus*, 97; *De Ecclesia*, 99.

63 *De Blasphemia*, 232–38, 229.

64 See *Triologus*, 361–65; on Francis, see 343. Similar treatments can be found in *Triologus*, 349; *Opus Evangelicum*, 1.410, 414; *Polemical Works*, 1.22–26.

65 *Dialogus*, 51–53, 54–55; *De Blasphemia*, 51; *Opera Minora*, 447; *Sermones*, 1.289. A common example in Wyclif is: “[I]sta exemplacio [Christ’s poverty] debet esse preciosior quam decreta omnium paparum, eciam Iohannis 22<sup>1</sup>, nisi in fide ewangelii sint fundata [this example ought to be more precious than the decretal of any pope, even Pope John XXII, unless it be founded in the faith of the gospel]”: *Dialogus*, 68; see 77–78. In fact, Wyclif in *De Ecclesia* cites Nicholas III’s *Exiit qui seminat*, which had historically confirmed the legitimacy of the Franciscan order (Leff, *Heresy*, 1.97–99), with no mention of the friars at all; he also redefines the terms of material “privilege” to mean “poverty” and advocate disendowment (177 and 180), so that the authority of “simplex sacerdos” is at a parity with that of the pope (326; see also *De Blasphemia*, 9–10, 168). Wyclif writes: “Cum ergo antiquissima et validissima privilegia, instituta a Christo, steterunt in paupertate altissima, sequitur quod non licet cuiquam privilegium illud subtrahere [since therefore the most ancient and legitimate privileges instituted by Christ are established in the severest (or highest) poverty, it follows that no one may licitly withdraw that privilege]”: *De Ecclesia*, 191. In *De Blasphemia*, however, he cites this decree in the context of friars who disobey it, but here he is following Fitzralph (232). On these issues (but with a different emphasis), see Levy, “Texts for a Poor Church.”

66 *Polemical Works*, 2.424–25; *Opera Minora*, 77.

67 What I claim here, for reasons that will be apparent below, goes for the monastic orders as well, for a common Wycliffite refrain is to speak *in toto* against “frerys, monkus and chanownes” (*EWS*, 1.441; see Arnold, *Select English Works*, 287, 295).

68 *EWS*, 3.2; see Arnold, *Select English Works*, 214, 246; Matthew, *English Works of Wyclif*, 68.

69 *English Works of Wyclif*, 39–51; see 48.

70 See Arnold, *Select English Works*, 301–02, 353–54, 391–92, 393, 398, 418, 444, 449; *EWS*, 1.328, 338, 542–43, 574, 589, 610, 628–29, 639–40, 644; 2.37–38, 179–80, 187; 3.52; Matthew, *English Works of Wyclif*, 120, 276, 285, 300–01, 304–05, 310, 318–19. Wycliffites sometimes cite Bernard as an authority but not usually on the monastic life; *EWS*, 1.615, 2.332; Arnold, *Select English Works*, 208, 216, 250, 291, 304, 470, 473, 477; Matthew, *English Works of Wyclif*, 104, 117, 167, 383 – save where Bernard is said to authorize a religious life of working and not begging and living luxuriously: Arnold, *Select English Works*, 371, and Matthew, *English Works of Wyclif*, 125 (below) and 270–71.

71 Matthew, *English Works of Wyclif*, 300, 301.

72 See Mollat, *Poor in the Middle Ages*, 119–34. The following is the closest I can find to a Wycliffite crediting (albeit in a qualified way) Francis for these

discoveries: “Also bisiden rome frere menours bi false name pursuen trewe pore freris to deþ, for as myche as þei wolden kepe fraunseis reule to þe lettere in pouert & mekenesse & in gret penaunce, & þerefore, þou3 þei haue name of franseis freris, þei ben enemys of crist & fraunseis & cruel man-sleeris. Also, 3if fraunseis take only þe gospel and no þing addiþ of his owne þer-to, it schulde not be clepid fraunseis reule but reule of crist or of þe gospel; & 3if he putte to þe gospel of his owne fyndynge, whi schulde he make þer-of a newe ordre, siþ þe ordre þat crist made him self is most perfit & most li3t & most siker to geten heuene by” (Matthew, *English Works of Wyclif*, 51).

- 73 For these quotations, see, respectively, *EWS*, 1.315, *EWS*, 1.591, *EWS*, 2.349 (see Matthew, *English Works of Wyclif*, 308). One Wycliffite writes that “seynt bernard & anselme seyn monkis & chanons ben bounden to þe same lif þat pore men of ierusalem helden after sendynge doun of þe holy gost.” Nowadays, says the author, monks “disceyuen þe peple bi ypocrisie” (*ibid.*, 125; see 12). This example is exceptional. The *Epistola*, in its discussion of the fraternal turn away from “Dominick and Frances,” omits a discussion of the *Rule* or any indication that that aversion was hypocrisy (see 91). Other examples of Wycliffite discussions of hypocrisy that are silent about the *Rule* or rules are at *EWS*, 1.264–67, 294–95, 338, 523–24, 533–34, 537, 2.41, 73, 373; 3.2, 46; Arnold, *Select English Works*, 231, 45, 372, 73, 449; Matthew, *English Works of Wyclif*, 20, 25–27, 211, 235–36, 299, 321. Other passages come close to discussing the *Rule* but instead speak of the friars’ original form of *Christian* living; e.g., “And so frerys, þat weren breþern in Crist and no3t charghows to þe chyrche, neþur in nowmbre, ne in cloþing, ne in mete, ne in howsyng, ben euene turned a3en fro þe fyrste life of hem. And zet by þer ypocrisy þei blynde þe chirche many gatis” (*EWS*, 1.286); “But þes ypocritis þat feynen þat þei suen Crist and þer patrounes, and 3it þei suen þer goostli enemyes and goon contrariouly to Crist, men shulden not helpe þes so myche as trewe men in Goddis cause” (*EWS*, 1.668).
- 74 That is the partial lesson of *Pierce the Plowman’s Crede* (lines 126–32, in *Piers Plowman Tradition*). For a background on some these issues, see Dawson, “Richard Fitzralph,” 316, 333, 340–41; Szittyá, *Antifraternal Tradition*, 42–44.
- 75 *EWS*, 1.357; see 353–34, 357–59, 484–85.
- 76 *Ibid.*, 2.321; see 2.55–56 and Arnold, *Select English Works*, 236, esp. 410–16. The Wycliffite author of “Jack Upland” puts it this way: “Whi is a frere apostata þat leueþ his ordre and takiþ þe cloþis & rulis of anoþer ordre, siþ Crist haþ made but oo religioun good and esie & comun for alle men & wymmen” (*Jack Upland*, 59, lines 122–24). Somerset argues (against Heyworth) that this poem was “produced or revised in the early 1380s to early 1390s”; she also dates “Friar Daw’s Reply,” which I note berates “Lollardi” and “lollardis” (*Jack Upland*, 73, lines 13 and 24; see 85, line 383), between 1388 and 1399 (*Clerical Discourse*, 217).
- 77 For more, see Hudson, “Poor Preachers”; Wilks, “Royal Priesthood: The Origins of Lollardy,” in *Wyclif: Political Ideas and Practice*, 101–16.

- 78 See *Sermones*, 3.320. See *Trialogus*, 341–44, on the different kinds of begging. So, too, does the author of *Dives and Pauper*, offering a spiritual poverty that can accommodate even wealthy lay persons (see 60/80).
- 79 Fol. 61r; Hunt, 2.340.
- 80 FZ, 282.
- 81 All references to *Piers Plowman* C are cited by passus and line from Russell and Kane's Athlone edition.
- 82 *Premature Reformation*, 407; see Gradon, "Ideology," 195–97.
- 83 Gradon, "Ideology," 197; Clopper, "*Songes of Rechelesnesse*," 203.
- 84 I follow Hanna's assessment that "they fulfill numerous features of the apostolic life and yet are not apostles ('as his postles ... or as his priue disciples,' 9.118). They walk, like Peter and Paul, but do not perform the specifically apostolic offices, preaching and healing, described in Luke 9:2 (9.112–13)" ("Will's Work," 49–50).
- 85 *Fyve Wyttes*, 19; *Works*, 503–23. The first example suggests to me that the author felt compelled to acknowledge the discourse of foolery as it attaches to "lollards." Some of this persecutory discourse might derive from Archbishop Courtenay's statement of 1382 that Wycliffite heresy was born of an "insaniam mentis [insanity of mind]" (*Concilia*, 3.158).
- 86 See Pearsall, "'Lunatyk Lollares,'" 170; Clopper, "*Songes of Rechelesnesse*," 203–04. For further, and related, connections between Clanvowe and C.9, especially the meanings behind the lines, "Godes munstrals and his mesagers and his mury bordiours / The whiche arn lunatyk loreles and leparas aboute" (136–37), see Pearsall's comments in his edition of *Piers Plowman*, 167n136, and "Lunatyk Lollares," 170–71. On "munstrals," see note 105 below.
- 87 *Fyve Wyttes*, 19.
- 88 Clopper argues that "lunatyk lollares" are "like *virī apostolici*, for they follow evangelical counsels. They go 'forth seluerles in a somur garnement / Withoute bagge and bred, as þe book telleth / *Quando misi vos sine pane et pera*' (Luke 9:3; C.9.119–20)" ("*Songes of Rechelesnesse*," 203; cf. "Langland's Persona," 165). "This text [Luke 9.3]," Clopper continues, "is one of the three Francis found when he sought scriptural sanction for this life of poverty ... and it is frequently cited by mendicants as evidence that Christ and the apostles were without possession and, therefore, that a life of voluntary poverty without manual labor was sanctioned by the Gospels" (203–04). Clopper concludes that the "lunatyk lollares" follow or manifest the apostolic life and the Franciscan ideal, but they are not designated as regular members of the order; indeed, it is not clear who these people are" (207). He surmises that Langland could be using the "lunatyk lollares" with deliberate vagueness, as "a code word" for an audience of "rigorists within the Franciscan order especially" but also lay people (208) – rigorists who argue for a return without compromise to the original Franciscan rule (32–33, 64).
- 89 Aers similarly notes that "[w]hen inventing 'lunatyk lollares,' the poet undoubtedly invoked elements of Franciscan discourse. But simultaneously he negated these" (*Sanctifying Signs*, 115). For Aers, this negation means that



these entities do not embody the “sanctifying sign of poverty”; my interest here is in showing that this poet’s negation is part of a collective effort to construe “lollards” as a class of lay persons who appropriate but supersede fraternal ideas and practices.

- 90 See Clopper, “Langland’s Persona,” 164, for the argument that the scriptural citations in this passage are meant to arouse enough nostalgia for the Franciscan past as to urge Franciscans themselves to relive it.
- 91 See also Matthew, *English Works of Wyclif*, 51. It is interesting that when Jack asks the friar to identify his “ordre” (*Jack Upland*, 58, line 103), the friar replies, “I am of Cristis ordre, Iak, & Crist made myn ordre” (81, line 260), realizing that the question is presupposed by the Wycliffite attack on the “new patrons.” Jack rejoins, “[p]in ordre [is] not groundid in þe gospel” (*ibid.*, 106, line 131) and then resorts to the Wycliffite rejection of “3our Dominikis reules” (111, line 299).
- 92 In passus 9, Langland refers to the Desert Fathers, “lyfholy as Eremytes” (196):

That wonede whilom in wodes with beres and lyons.  
 Summe hadde lyflore of here lynage and of no lyf elles  
 And somme lyuede by here letterure and labour of here handes  
 And somme hadde foreynes to frendes þat hem fode sente  
 And briddes brouhte somme bred þat they by lyuede.  
 Al they holy Ermytes were of heye kynne,  
 Forsoken lond and lordschipe and alle lykynge of body. (9.197–203)

Langland offers the more familiar historical argument, already used in his earlier and only citation of Francis (B.15.230–32/C.16.355–57), about hermitic origins, not to value the contemplative life in itself so much as point out that “holy hermits” remain an ideal unrealized, evident in the fact that friars, and those who pretend to be friars – “lollares, lachedrawerres, and lewede Ermytes” (193) – negate the life of the holy hermit. They are “*ne* lyf-holy,” awful by comparison (“Loke now” [241]). They do “Al þat holy Ermytes hatede and despisede” (C. 9.191). Judging from the world Langland constructs in his poem, friars are indeed the progenitors of eremitic practices, according to the legends of the Austin friars:

Paul *primus heremita* hadde yparroked hymselfe  
 That no man myhte se hym for moes and for leues;  
 Foules hym fedde, yf frere Austynes be trewe,  
 For he ordeyned þat ordre or elles þey gabben. (17.13–16)

The passage whence this comes, 17.6–36, communicates a lesson about those desiring, or having, property: “For wolde neuere faythfull god þat freres and monkes / Toke lyflore of luyther wynnynges in all here lyf tyme” (17.35–36). And here emerges the question of the “rule” (“he ordeyned þat ordre”). Of course, “hermit” can denote friars, Austins or Austin hermits; see Jones, “Langland and Hermits,” 79. On Langland and hermits, see also Hanna, “Meddling with Makings”; Godden, “Plowmen and Hermits.” Wycliffites



regard this form of life as solipsistic: “And gregori seiþ, þat men of gret kunnyng & vertuous lif þat chesen stilnesse & desert for loue of contemplacion ben giltif of as many soulis as þei my3tten saue bi techyng & dwellyng in þe worlde; & þus prechyng is algatis best” (Matthew, *English Works of Wyclif*, 112, and 113; see Arnold, *Select English Works*, 368).

93 Clopper, “*Songes of Rechelesnesse*”, 204; Pearsall, “‘Lunatyk Lollares’.”

94 Scase, *New Anticlericalism*, 220n21.

95 I differ from von Nolcken, who suggests that when Langland “recommends the conscientious preaching of God’s Word (B.10.273–74, B.13.427–28, C.7.88–89), he does not recommend with the Wycliffites that this be by unlicensed as well as licensed priests (item 15 [of the Blackfriars Council’s determination in] 1382); indeed he says explicitly that wandering preachers should have a bishop’s license (B.6.149)” (“*Piers Plowman*, The Wycliffites,” 79).

96 See Kerby-Fulton, *Books under Suspicion*, 70, 142, 205–33.

97 *Lanterne of Lizt*, 12; repunctuated.

98 Another Wycliffite tells the same story but with a different example, this time using the commonplace of God’s angels (or messengers) to refer to prophecy:

prelatis letten & forbeden prestis to preche þe gospel in here iurdiccion or bischope-riche, but 3if þei han leue & letteris of hem; & 3it god comaundeþ & chargiþ alle his prestis to preche freely the gospel. for alle cristis apostlis & disciplis weren chargid to preche þe gospel, & alle prestis ordeyned of god comen oþer in staat of apostlis or disciplis of crist ... an aungel is a messenger, þanne siþ þe prest generaly is a messenger of god he mot schewe his message, þat is þe gospel, in whiche is perfity teld goddis wille; and gregory vpon þe gospel proueþ wel þat eche prest mot preche, haue he litel kunnyng or moche. (Matthew, *English Works of Wyclif*, 57, 58; also see 90, 145, 171)

99 Respectively, see *ibid.*, 307; *EWS*, 2.147. What it means to be a prophet conforms, not surprisingly, to the Wycliffite idea of a good priest:

But goode prestis, þat lyuen wel in clenness in þou3t & speche & dede & good ensaumple to þe peple, & techen goddis lawe vp here kunnyng, & traueile fast ny3t & day to lerne betre & teche opynly & lastyngly, ben verrey prophetis of god & holy aungelis of god & gostly list of þe world, as god seyþ bi his prophetis & ihū crist in þe gospel, & seyntis declaren it wel bi auctorite & reson. (Matthew, *English Works of Wyclif*, 179)

100 *Ibid.*, 314; see also 112.

101 See Arnold, *Select English Works*, 271, 274, 333.

102 Matthew, *English Works of Wyclif*, 314; see Ezekiel 3.18.

103 I propose that “pleinge” here means “complaining” or “protesting,” rather than “playing” or “singing”; Pearsall reports that San Marino, Huntington Library, MS HM 143, offers “pleninge.” The sense, “playing,” of course supports the comparison of these figures with the “*ioculatores domini [dei]*”

- (Donaldson, *C-Text and Its Poet*, 146, 155; Pearsall, “Lunatyk Lollares,” 171; Clopper, “*Songes of Rechelesnesse*,” 201; Kerby-Fulton, *Books under Suspicion*, 114, 438n24), but that is not the reading I am endorsing here.
- 104 “Preche not” is a formula that elsewhere posits a negation and an affirmation in reformist-minded texts. For instance, the Wycliffite priest, Thorpe, illustrates how Arundel interprets incorrectly Paul’s refusal to be denied: “Lewed losel! whereto makist þou siche veyne resouns to me? Axip not seint Poul how preestis schulden preche no but þei were sente? But I sent þe neuere to preche” (“Testimony,” 46). And yet I preach, says Thorpe, because God sent me. Margery Kempe also uses the expression; in an episode where she is called a “loller,” she reports that a clerk quotes Paul at her and describes how she returns the favor: “I preche not, ser ... I use but comownycacyon and good wordys” (253).
- 105 Cf. Aers, *Sanctifying Signs*, 112–13. While not identifying Langland’s “lollares” as a version of ideal “lollardy” discussed here, Hanna offers the right remark about the former’s social function: “like the satiric Will, their subject is contemporary conditions, ‘þe peple.’ Prophecy and corrective disrespect for others seem linked traits; but such traits also accompany a highly qualified claim for poetic achievement” (“Will’s Work,” 50–51). On “fraternal correction,” see Craun, “3e, by Peter and by Poul!” As to the designation of these “lollares” as “Godes munstrals” (136), I would point out that Langland is here configuring “lollare” discourse for the appropriate, aristocratic audience, as designated in the earlier lines concerning “alle manere munstrals” who are patronized by “lordes” and “ladyes” (130):
- Ryht so, 3e ryche, 3ut rather 3e sholde  
Welcomen and worschipen and with 3oure goed helpen  
Godes munstrals and his mesagers and his murý bordiours,  
The whiche arn lunatyk loreles and leparés aboute  
For vnder godes secret seal here synnes ben keuered. (9.134–38)
- Line 137 repeats, of course, line 105, “The whiche aren lunatyk lollares and leparés aboute.” Russell and Kane report a variant reading at line 137 to be “lollers” (see 377n137). Craun supplies the most recent reading of Langland’s “munstrals,” reporting how the poet views their practices as illustrative of “sins of the tongue”; see his *Lies, Slander*, 157–86; esp., 158–67.
- 106 On how Langland rejects this speech, see Aers, *Sanctifying Signs*, 139–40, 156.
- 107 In his *Vox Clamantis*, John Gower refers to the donation of Constantine but does not recommend disendowment and rather points to how the donation corrupted the clergy: see *Complete Works*, 4.114–16, lines 283–328; *Major Latin Works*, 124 [Book 3.5].
- 108 Scase suggests that these lines refer to draft “lollare” material that Langland circulated before writing passus 5 and 9 of the C text, as we know them now; see “Two *Piers Plowman* C-text Interpolations”; *New Anticlericalism*, 149–50. Hanna challenges this thesis in *Pursuing History*, 204–14, while Kerby-Fulton extends it (“Bibliographic Ego,” 101–04).

- 109 Pearsall, for instance, acknowledges that the “sense of urgency we have in the lunatic lollers passage, the way in which the new subject is invested with such intensity and importance, has partly to do with Langland’s own desire to recognise himself among this class of privileged lunatics” (“Lunatyk Lollares,” 171). Clopper is more direct in saying that Will in C5 “presents himself as one of the ‘lunatyk lollares’ who are later described as observers of apostolic counsels” (“Langland’s Persona,” 159). See also Aers, *Sanctifying Signs*, 104–06.
- 110 Like Clopper, Hanna discerns the apostolic imperative of Will’s “lollardy” in C5, which is justified in C9: the “cover of lunacy – another of Will’s disguises, a concealment of the unlicensed yet learned self – would allow Will to follow that apostolic eremiticism he has chosen as his own” (“Will’s Work,” 52).
- 111 On the ways in which antifraternel discourse is generalized, see Szittyá, *Antifraternel Tradition*, 44–46; Scase, *New Anticlericalism*, 20.
- 112 Middleton, “Acts of Vagrancy,” 211, 276.
- 113 *Ibid.*, 278; cf. 254–55. For Middleton, the religiosity of “lollare” is an afterthought, discussed at the end of her article; see 280–88. For reassessment of Middleton’s claim here, see Kerby-Fulton, “Bibliographic Ego,” 71–78.
- 114 Middleton suggests that this passage derives from Matthew 13.44 and Luke 15.10 (see “Acts of Vagrancy,” 262). Kerby-Fulton identifies the source of these lines as Luke 16.1–8 (“Bibliographic Ego,” 90, 96).
- 115 *Sanctifying Signs*, 114.
- 116 Aers views the pardon as a “multivoiced” reflection the authority of which Langland leaves as an “unresolvable question” (*Sanctifying Signs*, 108). Even so, the pardon veers closely to estates satire and as such resonates as a discourse about social life.
- 117 See Bale, *Illustrium maioris Britanniae scriptorum* (1548) and *Scriptorum illustrium maioris Brytannie* (1557), as cited in DiMarco, *Reference Guide*, 3–7, and noted by von Nolcken, “*Piers Plowman*, the Wycliffites,” 74–75. See also Bale’s *Index Britanniae Scriptorum*.
- 118 Crowley, *Vision of Pierce Plowman*, iia.
- 119 As Hudson shows, Wycliffite works such as the *Plowman’s Tale* seem to have been inspired by the figure of Piers more than the poem itself. See Hudson, “Epilogue: The Legacy of *Piers Plowman*,” 255–63.
- 120 “Wyclif and the Great Persecution,” in *Wyclif: Political Ideas and Practice*, 186.
- 121 “Lollardy and the ‘Piers Plowman’ Tradition,” 792–93.
- 122 Likewise, Scattergood’s conclusion that “*The Two Ways* is not so much a Lollard tract as a treatise which shows some sympathy with Lollard positions” (*Works*, 19) might be revised. In the formal and theological sense, it is a “lollard” tract.
- 123 Most recently, Kerby-Fulton, “Bibliographic Ego,” 70, 75; *Books under Suspicion*, 124, 232–33, 375–78; cf. 145 and 465n121. On the status of the pardon, see Aers, *Sanctifying Signs*, 108–09.

- 124 Hudson rightly states the issue: “any local indication that Langland in C was tempering his words to avoid any implication of such [Wycliffite] sympathy seems to be countered by other local indications of the reverse” (*Premature Reformation*, 408). See also Hanna, *Pursuing History*, 239–40.

## INTERMEZZO

- 1 See Hudson, “Langland and Lollardy?” 98.
- 2 See *Historia Anglicana*, 1.157; *Knighton’s Chronicle*, 298.
- 3 Tanner, “Penances,” 242.
- 4 See my review of Shannon McSheffrey and Norman Tanner, eds., *Lollards of Coventry, 1486–1522*.

## GEOFFREY CHAUCER’S WYCLIFFITE TEXT

- 1 See poem no. 2: “3if þer be a pore prest and spirituale in spiryt, / And be deuoute, with deuocion his seruyse syng and say, / Þay likon hym to a lollere and to an epocryte” (*Poems*, 15, lines 131–33; see also lines 668–70), and poem no. 18: “Fore þay cal trew Cristyn men lollard, / Pat kepyn Cristis comawndmentis nyȝt and day, / And don Godis wil in dede and worde” (141, lines 253–55).
- 2 Chaucer’s works will be cited by fragment and line, or by title and line number, from *Riverside Chaucer*.
- 3 On Theseus’s “mild oath,” see Vincent J. DiMarco’s note in *Riverside Chaucer*, 834n1785.
- 4 The most recent questioning of the Parson’s place on the pilgrimage is Pitard, “Sowing Difficulty,” 306.
- 5 See Thorpe, “Testimony,” 74–80. Also, see item fourteen in “Thirty-Seven Conclusions of the Lollards,” 744.
- 6 *Instructions for Parish Priests*, 27, lines 869–72.
- 7 Cf. Little, *Confession*, 80.
- 8 On the Parson’s Wycliffite implications, however, see Hudson, *Premature Reformation*, 390–94, esp. 391; Aers, *Faith, Ethics*, 46–47; Little, *Confession*, 81–82, 86–87.
- 9 “Testimony,” 64.
- 10 I refer of course to Strohm’s “Chaucer’s Lollard Joke.”
- 11 Assessments of Chaucer’s use in the *Canterbury Tales* of Wycliffite polemic against ecclesiastical abuses are: Fletcher, “Chaucer the Heretic,” 75–106; Patterson, “Chaucer’s Pardoner,” 664–71. Others take a more associative approach, suggesting that the poet addresses cultural issues on the limits of ecclesiastical and secular rule that a number of his contemporaries, including the Wycliffites, were exploring. See Lawton, “Chaucer’s Two Ways”; Staley, “Postures of Sanctity,” 179–259; Aers, *Faith, Ethics*, 25–55.
- 12 Strohm, *Social Chaucer*, 42, 43, 44. On the “lollard knights,” see McFarlane, *Lancastrian Kings*, 182–85; cf. Tuck, “Carthusian Monks and Lollard Knights.”

- 13 Aston and Richmond, *Lollardy and the Gentry*, 18.
- 14 Trivedi, “Traditionality and Difference,” 138–40, 142–44; this dissertation is a good starting point for work on the manuscript tradition of the *Poor Caitif*. For the tract itself, see Hunt, 2.310–11.
- 15 See Doyle, “English Books,” 168–69; and more generally, Scattergood, “Literary Culture,” 34–35. Lewis Clifford, who oversaw the will of Latimer, seems to have been a literary companion of Chaucer, facilitating contacts between the poet and Eustache Deschamps, who famously praises the poet as the “grand translateur” (Pearsall, *Life of Geoffrey Chaucer*, 130–31). Clifford came to the notice of one chronicler for acting on behalf of the Queen Mother, Joan, in defending Wyclif at Lambeth Palace in 1378 (Walsingham, *Historia Anglicana*, 1.363) – hence his reputation as a “lollard knight.” On Chaucer’s knowledge of Wyclif through Ralph Strode, see Delasanta, “Chaucer and Strode.” Jeffrey details other possible contacts between Chaucer, Wyclif, Wycliffites, their friends, supporters, and opponents: “Chaucer and Wyclif,” 109–40.
- 16 *Issues of the Exchequer*, 236; for the Latin, see McFarlane, *Lancastrian Kings*, 193; see also 166–67.
- 17 *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 32.639.
- 18 EWS, 1.194, 193, 197–202. On the copying of Wyclif’s works at Braybrooke and elsewhere, see McFarlane, *Lancastrian Kings*, 196; Hudson, “The Debate on Bible Translation, Oxford 1401,” in *Lollards and Their Books*, 78–79.
- 19 Strohm does not include Latimer within “Chaucer’s circle.”
- 20 For instance, Sir William Beauchamp, whose status as a “lollard knight” remains a question, was the patron of Kemerton in Gloucestershire, where the copying of Wyclif’s and Wycliffite texts took place; see Hudson, *Premature Reformation*, 90–91.
- 21 *Pursuing History*, 8. See also Spencer’s account of how readers (orthodox and heterodox) availed themselves of Wycliffite vernacular sermons in a scenario where vernacular copy was in “short supply” in relation to Latin materials (*English Preaching*, 318).
- 22 See Staley, “Chaucer and the Postures of Sanctity”; Somerset, “‘As just as is a squire’” and “‘Here, There’”; Fletcher, “Chaucer the Heretic.”
- 23 For an argument that Chaucer gleaned Wycliffite “jargon” from word about town, see Phillips, “Register,” 101–28.
- 24 I cannot ascertain whether any of the surviving copies of the Wycliffite General Prologue were used by Chaucer. There are six complete versions: Cambridge University Library, MS Kk.i.8; Cambridge University Library, MS Mm.2.15; Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 147; London, British Library, MS Royal 1 C.viii; Oxford, Lincoln College, MS Lat. 15; Princeton, MS Scheide 12. And there are five partial versions: Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 277 (attached to revised EV and containing only the [first chapter](#) of the Prologue; as Hanna notes [*London Literature*, 312], Henry VI owned this Bible); a version split between two manuscripts, Tokyo, Keio University Library, Quaritch Catalogue 1036 (1984), item 120, and San Marino,

- Huntington Library, MS HM 501, on which see Hanna, *Handlist*, 25–30; Dublin, Trinity College, MS 75 (attached to a revised EV); London, British Library, MS Harley 1666; Oxford, University College, MS 96 (attached to a possible LV; see Lindberg, “Manuscripts,” 335).
- 25 On Chaucer’s omission of a translator’s prologue to *Boece*, see my “Chaucer’s English Lesson,” 1128–29. For an updated list of the manuscripts of this English Bible, see Dove, “Index of Manuscripts of the Wycliffite Bible,” in *The First English Bible*, 281–306.
  - 26 On these texts, see Renner, *Interpretatio*, 261–65.
  - 27 Cannon reevaluates Chaucer’s vernacular innovation in *Making of Chaucer’s English*. The volume, *Idea of the Vernacular*, is right to focus on English texts other than Chaucer’s (see xv–xvi). But the poet’s Prologue, as marginal as it is to the currently appreciated Chaucerian canon and as relevant as it is to English traditions of vernacular theory, could certainly warrant discussion in the editors’ otherwise insightful essays.
  - 28 See her *Adventures in the Middle Ages*, 111–49. Kean elaborates upon Loomis’s initial researches; see *Chaucer and the Making of English Poetry*, 1–30. There are arguments that Chaucer lifted verses from the Wycliffite Bible itself – the earliest by Ramsay, “Chaucer and Wycliffe’s Bible,” the latest by Fehrman, “Did Chaucer Read the Wycliffite Bible?”
  - 29 See Hudson, “Lollardy: the English Heresy?” in *Lollards and Their Books*, 141–63.
  - 30 “Court of Richard II,” 7. More recently, see Gillespie, “Vernacular Theology”: “In 1382, vernacular theology moved firmly onto the public intellectual agenda of the English Church with the Blackfriars Council ... Blackfriars responded to the Wycliffite version of vernacular theology” (409).
  - 31 Simpson, “Constraints of Satire,” 12.
  - 32 See the royal patent dated 13 July 1382: “Mandates insuper quod per universas aulas universitatis prædictæ, diligenter inquiri et scrutare faciatis indilate si quis aliquem librum sive tractatum, de editione vel compilatione prædictorum magistrorum Johannis Wyccliff, vel Nicolai habuerit, et quod librum illum sive tractatum, ubicunque contigeret inveniri, arrestari, capi, et præfato archiepiscopo infra mensem, absque correctione, corruptione, sive mutatione quacunque, quoad ejus sententiam vel verba, præsentari faciatis” [We command, furthermore, that you cause diligent search to be made through the halls of the said university and that inquiry be made without delay as to whether anyone has in his possession any book or tract put forth or compiled by the aforesaid masters John Wyclif or Nicholas [Hereford], and that you have such a book or tract, wherever it might by chance be found, to be laid hold of, seized, and handed over to the said archbishop within a month, without correction, corruption, or alteration of any kind as to its meaning or words]” (*FZ*, 313–14). This mandate, in singling out Hereford among all the followers of Wyclif, appears primarily as a response to the fact that Hereford was still errant. In the fall of 1382, Courtenay convened a council of twelve masters and doctors to examine Wyclif’s “multos libros et

libellos, aliosque tractatus et opuscula multa” (*Concilia*, 3.171) – the language of which is not specified. In so doing, the archbishop applied, yet restricted, the intentions of the regal mandate above to a more realizable application, the examination of Wyclif’s texts, a process that had, of course, already begun and would continue to transpire, in fits and starts, all the way up to Arundel’s Constitutions and the Council of Constance. See also the reference to John Aston’s so-called “confession,” written “in Anglico et Latino [in English and Latin]” (*FZ*, 329). The commission of 1388 also specifies “quamplures libri, libelli, cedulae, et quaterni hereses et errores manifestos continentes ... tam in Anglico quam in Latino [many books, tracts, leaflets, and pamphlets containing their heresies and manifest errors ... both in English and Latin]” (*Knigh-ton’s Chronicle*, 439–41). Whatever widespread literary censorship scholars assume the Blackfriars Council put in place, Courtenay himself had a very limited idea as to what and who should be censored. A similar argument could be made of the Constitutions, of which the practicalities of text checking were not explored by Watson in his important article, “Censorship and Cultural Change.”

33 *Concilia*, 3.317.

34 See *Corpus Iuris Canonici*, 2.785–86; *PL* 214:690–99.

35 See “Sixteen Points on which the Bishops accuse Lollards,” in *Selections*, 19–24; “On the Twenty-Five Articles,” in Arnold, *Select English Works*, 3.454–96; “Thirty-Seven Conclusions,” 738–49. These three texts may be described as position statements. Thorpe in his own set of model answers avoids speaking of the material, bookish bases of the scriptures; see “Testimony,” 78–79.

36 See Hunt, “Edition of Tracts.”

37 Fines, “Post-Mortem,” 530.

38 In 1426/27, Abbot John Whethamstede of St. Albans proclaimed that the wound of heresy is caused by “the possession and reading of books that are written in our vulgar idiom” (“vulnerationis occasio librorum possessio et lectura qui scribuntur in vulgari idiomate nostro” [*Annales Monasterii S. Albani*, 1.225]). It can be noted, however, that Whethamstede is not reporting on a generally shared principle among ecclesiasts but is rather grandiloquently generalizing at a heresy trial about a particular case involving William Redhead, who in his abjuration admitted to having “in mea possessione quedam libellam vulgaris idiomatis [in my possession a certain book in the vulgar idiom]” (1.227). The briefer entry on this case (*ibid.*, 13) mentions nothing of the language of books. On Whethamstede’s antihetical Synod, see Carlson, “Whethamstede on Lollardy,” 25–28; on the Abbot’s curious (and contradictory?) ownership of *Dives and Pauper*, see Hudson, *Premature Reformation*, 418.

39 Thomson, *Later Lollards*, 243, 70.

40 *Lollards of Coventry*, 30. McSheffrey also discusses this idea in *Gender and Heresy*, 37–46, 108–36. Concerning fifteenth-century texts, Hudson writes that “English sermons are found in that period that show a declared hostility to lollardy, thus revealing that the use of the vernacular was not necessarily a



sign of heresy” (“Lollardy: the English Heresy?” in *Lollards and Their Books*, 163). The same can be said, I believe, for Hereford’s Ascension Day sermon of 1382, reportedly delivered in English (“in lingua Anglicana” [FZ, 306]) but recorded by a notary in Latin; for which, see Forde, “Nicholas Hereford’s Ascension Day Sermon.” And what of the English *Speculum Vitae*? A colophon in three manuscripts of this poem claims that in 1384 a committee of doctors and theologians at Cambridge examined the work “per quatuor dies [for four days]” (Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 466, fol.1r) and found it to be clear of any defects or heresies. Hudson describes the colophon as “an early fifteenth-century attempt to provide credentials for the work” (*Premature Reformation*, 416). The colophon says nothing, however, about the vernacularity of this work.

- 41 *London Literature*, 309–10. The definitive study of the Wycliffite Bible is Dove, *The First English Bible*.
- 42 See my discussion of Ullerston below, 229n.66.
- 43 Readers typically evaluate the Prologue and Treatise as scientific or children’s literature. See Jambeck and Jambeck, “Handbook”; Lipson, “‘I n’am but a lewd compiler’”; Eisner, “Technical Writer”; Lerer, *Chaucer and His Readers*, 86, 87, 93; North, *Chaucer’s Universe*, 38–39.
- 44 See my “Chaucer’s English Lesson,” 1141–48.
- 45 I mean here to underscore how varied the question of equivalence is. Augustine prays to understand Moses’ meaning as it moves from Hebrew to Latin: *Confessiones*, 196 [11.3.5]. Here, translation is miraculous, even if, as other portions of his writings show, a matter of human custom and practice. Benjamin writes that the “suprahistorical kinship of languages rests in the intention underlying each language as a whole – an intention, however, which no single language can attain by itself but which is realized only by the totality of their intentions supplementing each other: pure language” (“Task of the Translator,” 74). For Benjamin, a new translation can, among other things, only be appreciated by a reader’s knowledge of the source text. Quine deals with the question of equivalence on the level of the sentence; his examples are the subject of this paper: “manuals for translating one language into another can be set up in divergent ways, all compatible with the totality of speech dispositions, yet incompatible with one another. In countless places they will diverge in giving, as their respective translations of a sentence of the one language, sentences of the other language which stand to each other in no plausible sort of equivalence however loose” (*Word and Object*, 27).
- 46 Here the “res” is happiness; *Confessiones*, 171 [10.20.29]; on signs and things, see also *De Doctrina Christiana*, 7–8 [1.2.2].
- 47 Yet Augustine, as if to avoid essentialism in *De Doctrina Christiana*, heeds the shaping force of communal practice on signification; see 60 [2.25.38].
- 48 These are the *tres linguae sacrae* upon which Augustine and Jerome would comment in discussions about translation, untranslatability, and the transmission of terms. See especially Augustine’s *De Doctrina Christiana*, 42 [2.11.16], 48–49 [2.16.23], 59–60 [2.24.37], 72–73 [2.39.59], 78–79 [3.2.4], 81–82 [3.4.8], 146–48



- [4.20.40–41], but also *Locutiones in Heptateuchum* (PL 34:485–546). Some of the texts central to Jerome's views on translation are *Prefatio Librum Job* and the epistle to Paul the Presbyter (number 53), which often served as a Vulgate preface; *Biblia Sacra: Iuxta Latinam Vulgatam Versionem*, 9.69–76, 1.68–69. In his preface to his translation and continuation of Eusebius's canonical history, Jerome supplies a rationale for textual correction and expansion: see *Chronique*, 56–60. For his other prefaces, see *Biblia Sacra: Iuxta Vulgatam Versionem*, 3–4, 285–86, 364–66, 546–47, 638–39, 676, 691, 712, 731–32, 767, 768–69, 957, 1096, 1166, 1266, 1341–42, 1374, 1515–16. Isidore of Seville, whose *Etymologiae* was one of the most widely circulated texts in the Middle Ages, discusses the *tres linguae sacrae*; see *Etymologiarum*, “De litteris communis,” 1.3.4–15; “De litteris Latinis,” 1.4.1–18; “De linguis gentium,” 9.1.3 [no pagination].
- 49 *Medieval Literary Theory*, 17; see also 18, 20, 21–22. For Augustine, the more etymologies are uncovered, the better for (scriptural) interpretation and translation; see *De Doctrina Christiana*, 72–73 [2.39.59].
- 50 Ralph of Longchamps, in his commentary on *Anticlaudianus*, ingeniously explains that by “Jupiter one understands God and His works. For ‘Jupiter’ means ‘helping father’ (*iuvans pater*), or ‘universal father’ (*ya-pater*), Greek *ya* being translated as ‘universal’ in Latin” (*Medieval Literary Theory*, 159; see also 162, 365). Among the commentators, Macrobius set the best (and perhaps earliest) example of translation as a process of reading traditions against one another, when he endeavored to show that Virgil in essence translated Homer: see *Saturnalia*, 1.240–345 [5]; esp. 1.247 [5.3.1]. Also relevant to translation is the debate about whether grammar is an essence of language, an accident, or mental abstraction; the former argues for an easy-equivalence view of translation, the latter two complicate it. See the texts of Robert Kilwardby, Pierre Hélie, Siger of Brabant, and one anonymous grammarian, all of which are contained in Thurot, *Extraits de divers manuscrits*, 124–31.
- 51 The best accounts are, for the earlier developments, Goez, *Translatio Imperii*; for the later ones, Lusignan, *Parler vulgairement*, 154–71. For a précis of the issues, see Jongkees, “*Translatio studii*: Les avatars d’un thème médiéval,” 41–51.
- 52 “hic primum logicam rationalem apud Graecis instituit, quam postea Aristoteles discipulus ejus, ampliavit, perfecit et in artem redegit. Marcus Terentius Varro primus dialecticam de Graeco in Latinum transtulit ... Demosthenes, fabri filius, apud Graecos rhetoricae repertor creditur, Tisias apud Latinos, Corax apud Syracusas. haec ab Aristotele et Gorgia et Hermagora in Graeco scripta est, translata in Latinum a Tullio, Quintiliano et Titiano” (Hugh of St. Victor, *Didascalicon*, 52 [3.2]; on scriptural translation and authority, see 72–74 [4.3], 75–78 [4.5–7]). Isidore supplies a similar model for these conventions in his mini-history of rhetoric: “Haec ... disciplina a Graecis inventa est, a Gorgia, Aristotele, Hermagora, et translata in Latinum a Tullio videlicet et Quintiliano, sed ita copiosa, ita varie, ut eam lectori admirari in promptu sit [This discipline was founded by the Greeks, by Gorgias, Aristotle, and Hermagoras, and translated into Latin by Tullius, clearly, and by Quintilian, but (done) so copiously and with such variation

that the reader would immediately admire it]" (*Etymologiarum*, 2.2, "De inventoribus rhetoricae artis" [no pagination]). On Vincent, see Stielre, "Translatio studii," 57.

- 53 Grosseteste rejects facile equivalence and rather argues that the disparities between languages are productive, allowing for idiomatic translation and paraphrase. See the prologue to his commentary on the *Celestial Hierarchy*, in *Mittelalterliches Geistesleben*, 1.465–66. Kilwardby should also be included among the problematizers of equivalence (Thurot, *Extraits de divers manuscrits*, 125–26).
- 54 Bacon follows Grosseteste and writes that "impossibile est quod proprietates unius linguae servetur in alia [it is impossible that the properties of one language are preserved in another]"; and "[n]os ... non consideramus ordinem linguarum, nec quod prior lingua non recipit interpretationem posterioris ... Et maxime prior ex posteriori non potest originem habere ... Unde Graecum non oritur ex Latino, nec Hebraeum ex Graeco. Et ideo non debet Hebraeum etymologiam capere ex Graeco, nec Graecum ex Latino [we do not consider the order of languages, nor (the fact) that a prior language does not accept the interpretation of a later language. And especially an earlier language cannot have its origin in a later language. Wherefore, Greek does not originate from Latin, nor Hebrew from Greek. And for that reason Hebrew ought not take its etymology from Greek, nor Greek from Latin]" (*Linguarum cognitio*, in *Opus Majus*, 3.80, 107). Yet he also believes in the inevitability in literary transmission: "omnes sancti et philosophi Latini, qui exponunt scientias, uti sunt linguis caeteris copiose, et multiplicant nobis infinita vocabula Graeca et Hebraea et Chaldaea et Arabica, praeter illa quae in textibus continentur. Et nos sumus filii et successores sanctorum et sapientum philosophorum, ut Boethii, Plinii, Senecae, Tullii, Varronis et aliorum sapientum [All the theologians and Latin philosophers, who explain the sciences, have used copiously other languages, and multiply for us countless words in Greek and Hebrew and Chaldean and Arabic, besides those contained in the texts. And we are the sons and successors of the theologians and wise philosophers, such as Boethius, Pliny, Seneca, Tullius, Varro, and other teachers of wisdom]" (*Opus Majus*, 3.88 [iii]; see also 3.109). Bacon probably draws from Augustine; compare *De Doctrina Christiana*, 72–73 [2.39.59] to Bacon, *Opus Majus*, 3.107 [vi]. On Bacon, see Lusignan, *Parler vulgairement*, 62–77.
- 55 Dante answers the enduring question – is meter translatable? – by inverting the conventions at issue and answering, No: "E questa è la cagione per che Omero non si mut di greco in latino come l'altre scritture che avemo da loro. E questa è la cagione per che li versi del Salterio sono sanza dolcezza di musica e d'armonia; chè essi furono transmutati d'ebreo in greco e di greco in latino, e ne la prima transmutazione tutta quella dolcezza venne meno [And this is the reason Homer does not translate from Greek into Latin like the other writings that we have from them and why the verses of the Psalter are without sweetness of music and harmony; for they were translated from Hebrew into Greek and from Greek into Latin, and in the first transmutation that

- sweetness was diminished]" (*Il Convivio*, 46–47 [1.7.15]). Cf. Augustine, *De Doctrina Christiana*, 146–48 [4.20.40–41]. Conrad of Hirsau had also identified the limits of biblical translation with respect to meter ("On Horace," 53–54, lines 1405–39); as did Petrarch, naming the Psalms verse in prose: Letter 10.4, in *Le Familiari*, 2.301–03.
- 56 In *De vulgaria eloquentia*, Dante observed an analogy between vernaculars: "Et quia per notoria itinera salubrius breviusque transitur, per illud tantum quod nobis est ydiuma pergamus, alia desinentes: nam quod in uno est, rationali videtur et in aliis esse causa [And because it is profitable and quicker to travel on familiar paths, we will proceed only through that of our own language, leaving off the others; for what in one [language] can be seen to be the reason is also in others the cause]" (60 [1.9.4–6]; see 44–132 [1.8–1.15]).
- 57 See *Medieval Literary Theory*, 14–15, 374–79, about the influence of "accessus-material" on Vincent of Beauvais (*Speculum maius*) and John of Wales (*Compendi-logicum*) and its redevelopment in the hands of later authors, such as Dante and Boccaccio.
- 58 Boccaccio, *Early Lives*, 39; in the original, "e quivi con le sue dimostrazioni fece più scolari in poesia e massimamente nella volgare; la quale, secondo il mio giudicio, egli primo non altramenti fra noi Italici esalt e rec in pregio, che la sua Omero tra' Greci o Virgilio tra' Latini" (*Trattatello*, 595–96). The longer version of *De Claris Mulieribus* includes an expanded passage about how Carmenta's invention of the Latin alphabet vaulted the language to the ranks of Greek and Hebrew (see *Forty-Six Lives*, 84–90).
- 59 See also the similar rationale for the prose telling/translation in *Melibee*, 7.946–52. "[R]eules" has three meanings in the Prologue and *Treatise*: grammatical, as in the "light reules" (26) of English; astronomical, as in "the generall reweles of theorik of astrologie" (Prologue, 103–04); and equipmental (*Treatise*, 2.1.1–24, 2.2.1–10). Chaucer here uses the grammatical sense, putting "diverse reules" back to "dyverse langages," of which English is legitimately a part, despite its "light reules."
- 60 On *inventio*, translation, and Chaucer, see Copeland, *Rhetoric*, 188–93.
- 61 Blamires, "Wife of Bath," 241n33.
- 62 Hanna, "Difficulty," 322n6. Olson follows Hanna in noting that the Prologue's "attitudes are consistent" with Wycliffite rationales for translation (see "Geoffrey Chaucer," in Wallace, ed., 582–83n38).
- 63 *Textual Criticism*, 152.
- 64 Landrum, "Chaucer's Use of the Vulgate"; Thompson, "Chaucer's Translation of the Bible"; Besserman, *Chaucer's Biblical Poetics*, 60–100, 101–37. For a discussion that Chaucer could have used the Wycliffite Bible and not the Vulgate, see Fehrman, "Did Chaucer Read the Wycliffite Bible?"
- 65 *Selections*, 107.
- 66 Similar arguments appear in an English rendering of Wyclif's *De Officio Pastoralis*, in which the translator, already loosely following Wyclif in some places, adds a section arguing for scriptural translation (Matthew, *English Works of Wyclif*, 429). Lindberg suggests that Wyclif is the author of this

English text and dates it between 1376 and 1384 (*English Wyclif Tracts*, 27); not all scholars accept that Wyclif's English writings survive. Other examples are in a tract on translation (*Selections*, 107–08); in a tract on the Pater Noster (Arnold, *Select English Works*, 3.98–100); in *Tractatus de Regibus* (*ibid.*, 127); in a prologue to John (Forshall and Madden, 4.685b); and in Bühler, "Lollard Tract," 173, lines 107–13, 115–17, which are original to the tract, whereas lines 113–14 (on French, German, Spanish) are derived from Ullerston (see Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, MS 4133, fol. 198rb). There are Latin examples of this argument in the *Opus Arduum* (quoted in Hudson, "A Neglected Wycliffite Text," in *Lollards and Their Books*, 53), dating from 1389–90 (Hudson, *Premature Reformation*, 157); and in a Latin sermon in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Laud Misc. 200, quoted in Hudson, "Lollardy: The English Heresy?" in *Lollards and Their Books*, 153. For a Wycliffite discussion of the difficulties of communication in English, see Arnold, *Select English Works*, 3.183. For Wyclif's contributions to these ideas, see Aston, "Wycliffe and the Vernacular," in *Faith and Fire*, 27–72.

67 *Selections*, 70.

68 "Trevisa's Original Prefaces," 292, lines 132–35.

69 Medieval translators often credit Jerome for inventing the "word for word," "sense of sense" distinction, as instanced in *Ad Pammachium de optimo genere interpretandi*, in *Sancti Eusebii*, 508. Yet Jerome, of course, follows Cicero's *De oratore* and *De optimo genere oratorum*. On Hieronymian commonplaces, see Workman, *Fifteenth-Century Translation*, 75–76, 79; Machan, *Techniques*, 4–5, 63; and Copeland, *Rhetoric*, 42–55. Of course, the distinction between both modes is often more rhetorical than practical, and one does not necessarily supersede the other, for as Augustine insists, "word for word" translations will always be useful as cribs for reading and correcting idiomatic versions; see *De Doctrina Christiana*, 44–45 [2.13.19].

70 Dedeck-Héry, "Boethius' *De Consolatione* by Jean de Meun," 168. When Chaucer petitions "to have my rude endityng for excusid," he seems to echo Oresme, who wrote: "je doy estre excusé en partie se je ne parle en ceste matiere si proprement, si clerement et si ordeneement comme il fust mestier" (*Livre*, 100).

71 The major dictionaries record no parallel usages until John Lydgate, who himself refers to Chaucer's Prologue to the *Treatise* (see Prologue, *Fall of Princes*, lines 293–301); s.v. *MED* "superfluite," "superflu[e]"; s.v. *OED*.

72 *EWS*, 1.323, 2.151–52.

73 *EWS*, 1.527.

74 *EWS*, 1.329; see also 3.110.

75 *Selections*, 68 (my emphasis).

76 Hargreaves, "Intermediate Version," shows that there are also middle stages between the Early Version and the Later Version.

77 *Selections*, 67–68.

78 Here "sentencis" stands for *sententiae*, in keeping with other portions of the Wycliffite General Prologue (Forshall and Madden, 1.37) and with another Wycliffite argument for scriptural translation inserted into a rendering

- of Wyclif's *De Officio Pastoralis* (Matthew, *English Works of Wyclif*, 429): "trewe sentensis of doctoures." Also s.v. *MED*, "sentence."
- 79 Steiner, *After Babel*, 318–24.
- 80 As the Wycliffite example shows, and as precedent indicates, "hard sentence" is a phrase arising specifically within the context of scriptural exegesis and translation. See Rolle, *Richard Rolle of Hampole's "Mending Life"*, 47; *Five Wyttes*, 12. Curiously, the *OED* cross-references Chaucer's use with that concerning "Bible translations" of the Reformation; s.v. "sentence," 3d.
- 81 See Machan, *Techniques*, 66; Hanna, "'Vae octuplex,'" 257–58. "[S]even eighths of the writing of the description [of the Astrolabe] is Chaucer's addition" and "one fifth of only one of three sections is in fact translated" (Lipson, "'I n'am but a lewd compilator,'" 196). See also Eisner, "Chaucer as a Technical Writer," 190–93, 196–98. Chaucer's "two-fold" expansion of the "sentence" (the meaning) also involves mere repetition, as in "Now have I told the twyes" (Treatise, 1.16.18, with reference to 1.7.5–12).
- 82 *Selections*, 68.
- 83 "Open" translation, Machan finds in his assessment of the Wycliffite General Prologue, is "something of a novelty in the late fourteenth century, despite the repeated affirmations of Jerome's 'sense for sense' dictum" (*Techniques*, 63).
- 84 In view of Dove, *The First English Bible*, 32, it bears emphasizing that my case does not depend on only one phrase ("superfluite of wordes").
- 85 Dove argues that the Prologue to the Wycliffite Bible should probably be dated 1387 (*ibid.* 110–13). See my earlier discussion of this question of dating, "Chaucer's English Lesson," 1154–55.
- 86 See *Lollards and Their Books*, 165–80; for Knighton, see 165.
- 87 For more corroborations, see von Nolcken, "A 'Certain Sameness,'" 196–97.
- 88 For instance, Julian of Norwich uses two supposedly Wycliffite terms, "ground" and "God's law," repeatedly; see *Shewings*, 37, 38, 46, 48, 74, 77, 80, 85–91, 95, 98–100, 106, 113, 116–19, 121, 123, 127, 128, 137, 147, 149, 154–55. Hudson discusses this problem of repetition; see "A Lollard Sect Vocabulary?" in *Lollards and Their Books*, 170.
- 89 For specific criticisms of this approach, see my "Chaucer's English Lesson," 1156n12.
- 90 The idea of "superfluous words" and arguments is common in scholastic discourse and disputation; for an example see *FZ*, 71; in the context of translation, Bacon writes "De superfluitate dictionis horribile est ac nefandum exemplum octavo Genesis [Concerning the superfluity of diction, there is a horrible and abominable example in the eighth chapter of Genesis]" (*Opus Majus*, 3.97). But the Wycliffites Englished, and hence likely introduced, Wyclif's scholastic use into vernacular parlance. A Wycliffite sermon on Mark 6.35–44 and 8.1–9, which shows how two accounts of feeding the multitude is not excessive or "superflue" (*EWS*, 1.323), directly borrows from Wyclif on the same subject, "superflue" (*Sermones*, 1.372). A vernacular sermon on Luke 11.33–36 evinces similar verbal borrowing, "superflew" (*EWS*, 2.151), "superflue" (*Sermones*, 2.405; see *EWS*, 5.188). In numerous places, Wyclif regards the private

religions or new orders as “superflue” (*Sermones*, 1.401), an estimation that likely informs the vernacular sermons; see *EWS*, 1.329, 358, 380. Wyclif links “superfluity” with “words,” when in his reading of Matthew 18.6, he speaks of scandalmongers whose “verbis superfluis” would mislead a child of Christ into sin (*Sermones*, 4.229; and see “verba ... superflua,” 2.236). While the corresponding vernacular sermon does not use the phrase in its reading of Matthew 18 (*EWS*, 2.315–18), another sermon explicates a parallel passage, Mark 9.43–47, suggesting that the friars who “sclaundere þe commune puple” (*EWS*, 3.264) should “caste þey away siche frerethod” and “leeue superflu þat man hap foundid by errour of his wille” (*ibid.*, 265). Both sermons refer to the yoking of a millstone around the neck of those who inveigle a child of Christ to sin (Mark 9.42 and Matthew 18.6).

- 91 The only exception I could find is mediated by Wycliffism, a translation of a pseudo-Augustinian text compiled in the larger work, the *Poor Caitif*, and named “Chartre of heven”: “þerfor bowe we away fro viciis and go we to vertues ne lete we not superflu wordis come out of oure mouþ” (Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 938, fol. 176r). For the Latin, see Fristedt, *Wycliffe Bible*, 89 (for the differently rendered English, see 29).
- 92 See Hunt, 1.74, 215.
- 93 From about the early fourteenth century on, English translators offset the perceived over-abundance of materials in “Latin” and “Frankis” (*English Metrical Homilies*, 4), an argument which was used widely both in English romances (*Of Arthour*, 1.1, 5, lines 19–30) and in religious writings: *Cursor Mundi*, 1.21, lines 232–48; *Speculum Vitae*, 469, lines 60–78; Grossetese, *Castel Off Loue*, 2; Horrall, “Latin and Middle English Proverbs,” 351, lines 26–33. Usk expanded this argument in his reflections on the language communities of Latin, French, English (*Testament of Love*, 48–49, lines 16–27). See also London, British Library, MS Harley 2398, fol. 1r: “þis lytel tretyse ... ys y-wryte yn englysche tunge for lewede men þat conneþ nouȝt vnderstonde latyn ne frensche. and ys y-drawe out of holy wryt by techynge of holy doctours þat haueþ yben byfore þis time.” For other roughly contemporary examples, see *Idea of the Vernacular*, 157–58, 225–26, 294. Many contemporary sermons speak of translation only formulaically, “Englysshe to youre vndirstondynge” (*Middle English Sermons*, 170; see *Three Middle English Sermons*, 22, 51). Moreover, religious writings, inclusive of affective spirituality, refer to translation differently from the Wycliffites’ polemical and grammatical arguments: see for instance Robert of Greatham’s Prologue to the *Miroir* (Hunt, “Edition of Tracts,” 2.430–62) and *Chastising of God’s Children*, 221.
- 94 He might find Richard Rolle’s prefacing commendable, for instance; see *English Writings of Richard Rolle*, 4–7. On these earlier traditions, see Lawton, “Englishing the Bible.”
- 95 “Trevisa’s Original Prefaces,” 292, lines 132–34.
- 96 Olson, “Geoffrey Chaucer,” 583.
- 97 Olson suggests that there are English arguments like the Wycliffites’ (and Chaucer’s) espoused by “more orthodox thinkers” (*ibid.*, 582). He does not

list these, but I am assuming he means Trevisa, whom he discusses in this context (see 583).

- 98 In *De translatione sacrae scripturae in linguam Anglicanam* (c.1401–c.1406), the Oxford schoolman Thomas Palmer, in his debate with Richard Ullerston, refers to, so as to refute, the following, now familiar argument: “Sic: iam habetur in Hebraico, Graece, Latino, Chaldaico et Gallico, et iam necessarium est Anglicam et barbaricam habere illam sicut praedicti. Igitur aequaliter est habenda a nobis in Anglico sicut et illis in vulgari suo [Thus: Now that sacred scripture is had in Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Italian, and French, it is also now necessary to have scripture in English as aforementioned. Therefore, equally it is to be had for us in English just as it is for those in their own vulgar tongue]” (419; see also 421).
- 99 Fowler combs through the history of opinions on the matter, starting with William Caxton’s, and then presents a case for Trevisa’s involvement in Wycliffite translation; see “John Trevisa and the English Bible,” 95–97, and “More About John Trevisa,” 244–45.
- 100 *Premature Reformation*, 396, 397.
- 101 Fowler, “John Trevisa and the English Bible,” 89.
- 102 See especially Spencer, *English Preaching*, 318.
- 103 *Premature Reformation*, 397.
- 104 The tract edited by Bühler, so far as I know, ranks second in number, with nine surviving manuscripts (*Idea of the Vernacular*, 146).
- 105 Not a document on translation, the preface to a concordance of the Wycliffite New Testament explains synonymy and equivocation and parses Middle English morphologies in ways that anticipate Early Modern English accounts of language; see fols. 3r–7r of MS Royal 17 B I.
- 106 The production of Latin–English/English–Latin word-lists in the fifteenth century also reflects a greater interest in prescriptive modes of translation. Examples of such texts are *Catholicon Anglicum*, *Ortus Vocabulorum*, and *Promptorium Parvulorum*. For a discussion of these, see Machan, *Techniques*, 13–19.
- 107 I refer to traditions that go back to Ælfric’s Old English grammar, which intercalates English sentences into Latin ones; see *Ælfrics Grammatik und Glossar*. But I am limiting these claims to Middle English and am interested in the swell of grammatical texts in Latin and, eventually, in English in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries. John Cornwall’s *Speculum Grammaticale* (1346) is distinct for being the first, in the later Middle Ages, to employ English in the learning of Latin grammar. Excerpts of this text are in Bonaventure, “Teaching of Latin,” 17–18; see also Thomson, “Oxford Grammar Masters.” Thomson notes that interest in grammar at Oxford rose considerably after 1380, from a dwindling of concern some twenty years before, and considers Trevisa and the author(s) of the Wycliffite General Prologue as early indicators of the revival of grammar instruction via the vernacular. The works of John Leyland (d.1423), an Oxford grammar master, proved to be particularly influential.



- See Thomson's introduction to his *Edition of the Middle English Grammatical Texts*, xi–xii; and to his earlier *Descriptive Catalogue*, 4–47. See also "An Early Treatise in English Concerning Latin Grammar," 98–125; and Copeland, "Vernacular Translation," 143–54. Other vernacular hermeneutic texts reproduce the four-fold system of interpretation; see "A Middle English Treatise on Hermeneutics," 590–600.
- 108 Thomson considers Trevisa and the authors of the Wycliffite General Prologue as proponents of grammar instruction in the vernacular; see *Edition of the Middle English Grammatical Texts*, xi–xii.
- 109 *Selections*, 68.
- 110 *Ibid.*, 71. Also see Trevisa's grammatical concerns, in "Trevisa's Original Prefaces," 294.
- 111 EWS, 3.27; Bühler, "Lollard Tract," 176, line 232; 177, line 238. A Wycliffite, in claiming that friars "mot curse gramaryens þat Engliſhen þo gospel" (Arnold, *Select English Works*, 3.405), associates scriptural translation with grammatical interests.
- 112 Masi, "Chaucer, Messahala and the Bodleian Selden Supra 78," 44. See also Hudson, *Premature Reformation*, 247, and more generally Bennett, *Chaucer at Oxford and at Cambridge*, 58–85. Cf. *Idea of the Vernacular*, 91.
- 113 Hanna, *Pursuing History*, 1. See Pearsall, *Geoffrey Chaucer*, 33; Machan, *Techniques*, 66.
- 114 *Fall of Princes*, 1.8–9, lines 292–93.
- 115 Forshall and Madden, 1.57.
- 116 Or as Hanna felicitously remarks: "Boece lacks any explanatory preface, and for Chaucer's views on the usefulness of translation, one must rely on the preface to his piece of 'kiddie lit,' *The Astrolabe*" ("Vae octuplex," 262–63n34).
- 117 "Compiler, qui aliena dicta suis praemiscet" (Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiarum*, 10.44).
- 118 See Fish, "Interpreting the *Variorum*," in *Is There a Text in this Class?* 172–73.
- 119 See *Variorum Edition*, xx–xxi, 48–81; *Riverside Chaucer*, 1193 (which includes London, British Library, MS Sloane 446 – a Latin fragment). On London, Royal College of Physicians, MS 358, see Eagleton, "Previously Unnoticed." The Prologue is contained in twenty-four of these manuscripts; see *Riverside Chaucer*, 1193–94; two manuscripts (Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 68, and Aberystwyth, National Library of Wales, MS Peniarth 359), omit lines 1–64 of the Prologue. On the manuscript groupings of the *Treatise*, see my review of Eisner's *Variorum Edition*.
- 120 The runner-up, Chaucer's "Truth," is contained in twenty-three manuscripts (*Riverside Chaucer*, 1189); Hanna counts twenty-four (*Pursuing History*, 162).

## THOMAS HOCCEVE'S HERETICS

- 1 *Concept of Anxiety*, 139–40.
- 2 On Hoccleve's role in establishing this tradition, see Spearing, *Medieval*, 88–110, and Lerer, *Chaucer and His Readers*, 23–24, 58–59.



- 3 References to the *Regiment of Princes* are cited by line from Blyth's edition. We cannot forget that Hoccleve also names John Gower as his "maistir" (1975).
- 4 See Chaucer, *Riverside Chaucer*, 2.1173, 1175, cited by fragment and line. It is entirely possible that neither Hoccleve nor Lydgate ever saw this interesting endlink; for a discussion of its authenticity, see *ibid.*, 862–63.
- 5 On the anticlerical difference between Hoccleve (and Lydgate) and Chaucer, see Scanlon, *Narrative, Authority, and Power*, 298.
- 6 See Pearsall, "Hoccleve's *Regiment of Princes*," 403–04; Scanlon, *Narrative, Authority, and Power*, 313–14; Nissé, "Gender, Heresy," 275–99; Strohm, "Hoccleve, Lydgate and the Lancastrian Court," 645; Knapp, *Bureaucratic Muse*, 107–27.
- 7 Spearing, "Father Chaucer," 148.
- 8 Watson, "Censorship and Cultural Change," 826.
- 9 Lawton, "Dullness"; Scanlon, "King's Two Voices," 233; Simpson, "Nobody's Man"; Strohm, "Hoccleve, Lydgate and the Lancastrian Court," 659–60, cf. 657.
- 10 Simpson, *Reform and Cultural Revolution*, 208. See Scanlon, *Narrative, Authority, and Power*, 298–99.
- 11 *Counsel and Constraint*, 11, where the suggestion is also that Hoccleve "echoes the anxiety of the Constitutions about lay discussion of religious questions." Knapp, however, acknowledges that while "Hoccleve's conformity with Lancastrian orthodox polemics was both substantial and formal," the poet "allows ample room for wandering into the margins of orthodoxy" (*Bureaucratic Muse*, 133, 137).
- 12 For other possible instances of lay persons executed as heretics, see Kerby-Fulton, *Books under Suspicion*, xx, xxi, xxviii; potential executions by neglect are xxix–xxx, xxxiii.
- 13 And by "topical," I do not mean Chaucer's handling of literary sources that tacitly figure forth post-Wycliffite concerns, as the work of Lynn Staley especially shows; see her chapter, "Chaucer and the Postures of Sanctity." Rather, I mean direct, overt references to historical events or controversies. Nor do I mean the earlier findings on specific Chaucerian poems as "occasional" pieces, from the *Book of the Duchess* to the lyrics.
- 14 Hoccleve is, of course, topically minded about much else, too, such as the wars with France.
- 15 Simpson, *Reform and Cultural Revolution*, 250. Different critics use different titles for this poem; I shall use "The Address to Sir John Oldcastle."
- 16 Bowers, "Politics of Tradition," 354. Knapp does a fine job of detailing how Hoccleve figures Oldcastle as both an image (or "anti-saint") and an object of desire caught between the "lollards" on one side and Prince Henry on the other (see *Bureaucratic Muse*, 138, 144). He concludes that "Hoccleve maintains a skeptical distance between himself and the iconic methods of Lancastrian propaganda he is so often taken to exemplify" (146).
- 17 See *FZ*, 449–50.
- 18 "Cuius dampnacionis sententia cum processu in registro archiepiscopi continetur [The sentence of his (Oldcastle's) condemnation, together with

- the legal record, is contained in the archbishop's register]" (*Gesta Henrici Quinti*, 8–9).
- 19 See Walsingham, *Historia Anglicana*, 2.291–96; *St. Albans Chronicle*, 70–77; *The Brut*, 386, 551; see also 373–74, 494.
  - 20 At line 273, where the use of the second-person plural “yee” begins, it becomes readily apparent that the “Address” is a two-part poem. San Marino, Huntington Library, MS HM 111, from which Seymour prints his edition, offers a large capital here, likely pointing to the turn in the poem (see *Selections from Hoccleve*, 131n273). At line 488, Hoccleve ends his polemic against the nameless heretics and returns to speak to Oldcastle at line 489, “Yit, Oldcastel.”
  - 21 Like many before him, Seymour dates the poem rather precisely to August 1415, based on the colophon announcing Henry V's departure for the Norman campaign; see *Selections from Hoccleve*, 129; for the colophon, 60. Burrow also dates the poem to 1415 (*Thomas Hoccleve*, 16–29). The lines, “Somme of thy fetheres were plukkid late, / And mo shuln be” (257–58), however, appear to refer to Oldcastle's arrest, September 1413, and trial in that month. On “the very strange temporal structure” of the “Address,” see Knapp, *Bureaucratic Muse*, 145–46.
  - 22 See Walsingham, *Historia Anglicana*, 2.291, 296. See also FZ, 434–35.
  - 23 The first is a general pardon issued 9 December 1414 that Oldcastle could have pursued; see *Calendar of Letter-books*, 132: “Writ to the Sheriffs to proclaim a general pardon granted by the King to all rebels, felons, &c., who severally sue for charters of pardon before Michaelmas Day next.” A previous general pardon of 28 March expressly excluded the knight from its terms; see *Foedera*, 9.119–20. The second pardon, dated 18 February 1415, was issued for Oldcastle especially; see *Calendar of Letter-books*, 133–34: “Writ to the Sheriffs to the effect that whereas John Oldecastell, of Coulyng, co. Kent, knight, had not availed himself of the King's offer of pardon already promulgated, they were now to make proclamation that unless he came and made submission by the quinzaine of Easter next the pardon would be void. 18 Feb. 2 Henry V.” On these pardons, see John A. F. Thomson's entry, “Oldcastle, John, Baron Cobham (d.1417),” in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 41.671a. More generally, see McFarlane, *John Wycliffe*, 180–81; see also 172. Thomson and McFarlane refer to the second pardon but do not indicate the source. While Walsingham is silent about these pardons (see *Historia Anglicana*, 2.291–99), the *Chronicle of London* offers information in an entry for 1415: “And on the iiij day of March after, was the pardon of lord Cobbeham, that is to seye [Sir] John Oldcastell, proclaimed” (99); the date appears wrong, however.
  - 24 See the examples below in my discussion of the *Regiment*; see also Thomson's *Later Lollards*, which begins with the “lollard” rebellion of 1414 in a chapter entitled, “Lollardy after the Oldcastle Rising,” and which documents numerous general and individual pardons going to the named participants.
  - 25 For the parliamentary enrollment, see *Rotuli parliamentorum*, 4.107–10.
  - 26 See FZ, 438–39, 443–45.

27 See *ibid.*, 440.

28 *Ibid.*, 441.

29 *Ibid.*, 441–42.

30 *Ibid.*, 445

31 *Ibid.* The poem's title is modern, of course.

32 *Medieval English Political Writings*, 92–96.

33 By way of comparison, see *John Capgrave's Abbreviacion of Cronicles*, 240–41, which picks and chooses portions of the trial to cite, but which is rather faithful to the spirit of the proceedings themselves. See also Walsingham, *Historia Anglicana*, 2.291–99, and *FZ*, 433–50.

34 *Gesta Henrici Quinti*, 2–3.

35

And syn a kyng by way of his office  
To God ylikned is, as in maneere,  
And God is trouthe itself, than may the vice  
Of untrouthe nat in a kyng appeere,  
If his office shal to God refeere. (2409–13)

See also “And a kyng in fulfilling of that [ooth] is / To God lyk, which is veray rightwysnesse” (2521–22), and the first ballade in “More Balades to King Henry V,” in *Selections from Hoccleve*, lines 1–8.

36 Seymour annotates this line with reference to Henry V's pardons; see *Selections from Hoccleve*, 131n261.

37 See Hudson, “The Examination of Lollards,” in *Lollards and Their Books*, 125–40, and Aston, “Bishops and Heresy,” in *Faith and Fire*, 73–93.

38 “quod sicut Christus hic in terra degens habuit in se divinitatem et humanitatem, divinitatem tamen velatam et invisibilem sub humanitate, quæ in eo aperta et visibilis fuerat, sic in sacramento altaris est verum corpus et verus panis; panis videlicet quem videmus, et corpus Christi sub eodem velatum, quod non videmus [that as Christ when living here on earth had in himself divinity and humanity, yet divinity veiled and invisible under humanity, which in him was open and visible, so too in the sacrament of the altar there is the true body and true bread; namely, the bread that we see and the body of Christ veiled under the same, which we do not see]” (*FZ*, 443–44). Arundel needed Oldcastle to repeat back to him verbatim these eucharistic points containing a very precise teaching on transubstantiation: “the materyall bred that was before is turnyd into Crystys veray body; and the materyal wyn that was byfore, is turnyd into Crystys veray blood, and so there levyth in the auter no materyal, ne materyal wyn, the whyche were there before the seyinge of the sacramental wordys. How leewe 3e thys article?” (*FZ*, 441–42).

39 Aers, “Christianity for Courtly Subjects.”

40 See Nissé, “Gender, Heresy,” 294–95.

41 See the list of sources cited in Chapter 2, note 73.

42 “quod dominus Johannes Oldcastell, miles, fuerat et est principalis receptator, fautor, protector et defensor eorumdem [Lollardi] [that lord John Oldcastle,

knight, has been and is the principle receiver, favorer, protector and defender of the same Lollards]" (*FZ*, 434; see 433).

- 43 Oldcastle was generally viewed as the leader of "lollards," who called them together to stage a rebellion at Eltham, as Walsingham had it: "Lollardi . . . sub ipso noctis conticinio in campum qui dicebatur Sancti Ægidii, prope Londonias, ubi ferebatur eorum campi-ductor, Johannes Oldcastelle, Dominus de Cobham, suos satellites opperiri . . . Qui requisiti quamobrem sic festinabant, et velut anhelii currebant, responderunt se properare ad Dominum de Cobham, qui eos conductos suis stipendis accivisset [the lollards came in the still of night to a field (that is) called St. Giles near London, where their leader, John Oldcastle, Lord of Cobham, brought his followers to wait . . . When asked why they made haste, as if they ran themselves out of breath, they responded that they were rushing to the lord of Cobham who had summoned them (as) soldiers for his payment]" (*Historia Anglicana*, 2.297–98). The poet of "Lo, He That Can Be Cristes Clerc" agrees:

An old castel, and not repaired,  
 With wast walles and woves wide,  
 The wages ben ful yvel wared  
 With suich a capitayn to abide,  
 That rereth riot for to ride  
 Agayns the kyng and his clergie,  
 With privé payne and pore pride.  
 Ther is a poynt of Lollardie.  
 (*Medieval English Political Writings*, 93, lines 33–40)

God wol not suffre hem be so stronge  
 To bryng her purpos so abowte,  
 With *saunz faile* and *saunz doute*,  
 To rere riot and robberie.  
 By reson thei shul not long route,  
 While the taile is docked of Lollardie.  
 (*Ibid.*, 94–95, lines 83–88)

See also Capgrave, *John Capgrave's Abbreviacion of Cronicles*, 241–42. Strohm reads through the discrepancies of the Lancastrian textual record concerning Oldcastle and ingeniously (to my mind) demonstrates the magnitude of the Lancastrian effort to paint Oldcastle with the treason of fomenting a rebellion against the king; see *England's Empty Throne*, 74, 78–82.

- 44 The second part of the poem, which Seymour suggests is composed at a later date than the first part (*Selections from Hoccleve*, 129), contains a reference to the rebellion of 1414:

Ne neuere they [the disciples of Cryst (379)] in forcible maneere  
 With wepnes roos to slee folk and assaille  
 As yee diden late in this contree heere,  
 Ageyn the kyng stryf to rere and bataille.

Blessid be God, of your purpos yee faille,  
 And faille shuln. Yee shuln nat fourth therwith.  
 Yee broken meynnee, yee wrecchid rascaille  
 Been al to weyk, yee han therto no pith. (385–92)

The words in lines 391 and 392, “meynee,” “rascaille,” “al,” “yee,” are plurals referring to the heretical group, but Oldcastle is clearly excluded.

- 45 These lines echo 1 Cor. 16.13: “vigilate state in fide viriliter agite et confortamini [Watch ye: stand fast in the faith; do manfully; and be strengthened].”
- 46 Hoccleve is, therefore, vague about what Oldcastle’s submission to the authority of the English church would entail: “To thy correccioun now haaste and hie, / For thow haast been out of ioynt al to longe” (199–200). Furthermore, Oldcastle’s submission is imagined as self-effected: “Bowe and correcte thee” (245). Bow to whom? In a similar vein, Little suggests that a different work – the *Regiment* – is Wycliffite “in its approach to self-definition,” in its “retreat from confession” as traditionally conceived (*Confession*, 117).
- 47 See *Concilia*, 3.356.
- 48 On Hoccleve’s work in the Privy Seal, see Burrow, *Thomas Hoccleve*, 3–9.
- 49 *Concilia*, 3.325. I agree with McNiven (though he does not explicitly clarify this point; see *Heresy and Politics*, 202), that “Edmundo” (Wilkins, *Concilia*, 3.325) is an error referring not to Edmund but to Edward, Duke of York. This cannot, for obvious reasons, be Edmund of Langley, Duke of York, and son of Edward III, who died in 1402; see Jacob, *Fifteenth Century*, 6, 292. I have altered the Latin text accordingly.
- 50 Hoccleve’s filiations with Edward, Duke of York are evident in the fact that he wrote a petitionary poem to him, “Ballade to Edward, Duke of York,” fashioning himself as an intimate: “How at ones at London desired he / Of me, þat am his servaunt and shal ay” (*Selections from Hoccleve*, 55–56, lines 11–12; see 126).
- 51 See Tout, *Chapters*, 1.286. Thomas Beaufort was Chancellor of England in 1410–12, and his brother, Henry Beaufort, was chancellor in 1403–05, 1413–17, and 1423. See Jacob, *Fifteenth Century*, 105.
- 52 Henry Somer “passed from the service of the privy wardrobe to be baron, and ultimately chancellor, of the exchequer” (Tout, *Chapters*, 4.480). For a related discussion of Hoccleve’s personal and professional ties, see Thompson, “A Poet’s Contacts.”
- 53 Brown details the administrative capacities of a Privy Seal clerk in “Privy Seal Clerks,” 261. For the relevant writ, which Hoccleve may have sealed, see *Calendar of the Close Rolls, 1409–1413*, 4.30.
- 54 See Hoccleve, “Formulary.” The formulary is London, British Library, MS Additional 24062.
- 55 Pearsall suggests that Hoccleve might have modeled the Old Man, a Carmelite, after Stephen Patrington, the Carmelite friar and confessor to the king who was present “with the prince at Badby’s burning,” and who was “one of the most famous of the early anti-Lollard polemicists” (“Hoccleve’s *Regement of Princes*,” 407). Cf. Little, *Confession*, 120–21.

- 56 At the trial of Badby, clerks were part of the official record, witnesses by virtue of their own writing, and by dint of the fact that they are notaries at the trial – notaries such as John Chew and Walter London who offer “attestations” verifying that Badby uttered heresies. See *Concilia*, 3.326–27. Other notaries were present as witnesses: “magistris Will. Hayles ... [et] John Swyppeden, notariis publicis” (*ibid.*, 3.326). The notary Philip Morgan read out the “articles” said to be held by Badby (*ibid.*).
- 57 Strohm, “Hoccleve, Lydgate and the Lancastrian Court,” 644.
- 58 The fateful writ sought “to cause [Badby] to be burned in detestation of his crime and for an example to other Christians ... and to inflict condign punishment upon convicted heretics, being aware that when condemned they ought according to the law of God and man to be burned with fire” (*Calendar of the Close Rolls, 1409–1413*, 4.30).
- 59 Strohm, *England’s Empty Throne*, 42–43; quotation on 42. See also Hudson, *Premature Reformation*, 118. The Prince issued a writ that preceded the 1401 *De heretico comburendo* and which had greater legislative weight than the statute itself. For the petition Prince Henry presented at parliament, “touchant des Lollardes,” see *Rotuli parliamentorum*, 3.583–84; see also 3.466–67. For more background information, see McNiven, *Heresy and Politics*, 81–92.
- 60 See McFarlane’s chapter, “Henry V: A Personal Portrait,” in *Lancastrian Kings*, 114–33, and Patterson’s, “Making Identities.”
- 61 See lines 1832, 1899, 1878, 1944, 2016–56, 2185, 2390, 2451, 2647, 2773, 3269, 3310, 3329, 3903, 3963, 4027, 4387, 4390, 4471, 4643, 4740, 4747, 4787, 4831–37, 4847, 4966, 4891, 4964.
- 62 *Historia Anglicana*, 2.282.
- 63 On Egidius and the “Parisian Tradition,” see Scanlon, *Narrative, Authority, and Power*, 105–18.
- 64 *Summa theologiae*, 34.217 [2a.2æq.30 a.3]. Aquinas fuses questions of mercy and pity per se, which is why this passage is relevant; see Keaty, “Christian Virtue of Mercy.” In this Quæstio, he also speaks of pity, indicating that pity is rightly given to friends as a way of sharing grief; this, however, is not mercy (211). See also his reflections on injustice: *Summa theologiae*, 37.54–57 [2a.2æq.59 a.1].
- 65 The *MED* does not explain this particular usage at line 298, and the editor, Blyth, defines it as “eagerly” (48, sidenote). I am selecting the following meaning offered by the *MED*, for the noun and adjective respectively: “Mental pain or suffering, sorrow, grief”; “Causing sorrow, grievous, bitter.” Hoccleve himself defines “sore” through similar phrasings that link “thirst” to “sore,” emphasizing appetites, desires, needs, and passions: “Or art thou needy and hast nat but smal, / And thristist sore a ryche man to be? / Or lovest hire that nat loveth thee?” (236–38); “If thou heeraftir come unto swich preef, / Thou wilt ful sore thriste aftir releef” (900–01). Similarly, there is a bodily emphasis in Hoccleve’s usages, as in “Stommak is oon, whom stowpyngre

- out of dreede / Annoyeth sore" (1019–20), as well as worldly desire for "muk" (1123–24; see also 1302).
- 66 Trevisa, *Governance of Kings and Princes*, 131.
- 67 See Galloway, "Literature of 1388."
- 68 Walsingham, *Historia Anglicana*, 2.282; *Chronicle of London*, 92.
- 69 On the acquisition of a royal pardon through the efforts of an important or noble intercessor, see Bellamy, *Crime and Public Order*, 194, 85.
- 70 Of Badby, the *Eulogium continuator* says: "Qui cum comburi cœpisset, clamavit dicens: 'Miseremini mei'" (*Continuatio Eulogii*, 417); the *Chronicle of London* has: "and whan the wrecche felte the fyre he cryed mercy, and anon the prynce comanded to take away the toune and to quenche the fyre" (92). Tellingly, in Hoccleve's version, Prince Henry is *not* even shown to act on this cry for mercy by quenching the fire. See also Walsingham, *St. Albans Chronicle*, 52.
- 71 *Chronicle of London*, 92. See also Walsingham, *Historia Anglicana*, 2.282; cf. *St Albans Chronicle*, 52. The *Eulogium continuator* tells it thus (mistakenly reporting that the trial was before parliament): "Et cum quæreretur *ab eo coram Rege et parlamento* quid dixisset si fuisset cum Christo in Cæna quando Christus dixit: 'Hoc est "Corpus Meum"' respondit: 'Dixissem quod Ipse dicit "falsum"' (*Continuatio Eulogii*, 416–17, my emphasis).
- 72 See Arundel's offer to intercede on behalf of Badby's soul if the heretic recants, in *Concilia*, 3.327. There were no secular charges whatsoever applied to Badby, no charge of treason.
- 73 I thank Richard F. Green for discussing pardons with me.
- 74 And in this respect, Hoccleve's "piteous" Prince differs from the pitying male figures in Chaucer, whose pity, as Mann shows, always leads to action, as in Aurelius's release of Dorigen (*Feminizing Chaucer*, 94; see 97–98, 131, 134, 135–37).
- 75 In other sources, the court subject is named Perillus; the tyrant, Phalaris.
- 76 Simpson, *Reform and Cultural Revolution*, 208. For a related view, see Spearing, "Father Chaucer," 147–48; Perkins, *Counsel and Constraint*, 74–75.
- 77 See *Gesta Romanorum*, 346–47 [cap. 48], which cites Ovid (line 30).
- 78 See Ovid, *Tristia*, in *Ovid*, 144–45 (3.11, lines 39–54); *Ibis*, in *Contre Ibis*, 22 (lines 437–40); *Ars Amatoria*, 25 (lines 651–55); and Gower below. Hoccleve's source text for this exemplum is Jacob de Cessolis's *Ludo Scachorum*, 17–18. See Perkins, *Counsel and Constraint*, 104–05, for a brief comparison between the *Regiment*, this source, and the Ovidian version. Also see below.
- 79 *Acts and Monuments*, 1.480b. Not surprisingly, Foxe finds that Prince Henry exhibited "some part of the good Samaritan" in contrast to "the hypocritical Levites and Pharisees" (*ibid.*).
- 80 See Wallace's chapter, "All That Fall: Chaucer's Monk and 'Every Myghty Man,'" in *Chaucerian Polity*, 304–36.
- 81 Jacob de Cessolis, *Ludo Scachorum*, 17. The next sentence pertains to cruelty; hence my translation of "impietatem" as "cruelty": "Difficile mihi videtur pium hominem impia morte perire et crudeles homines credeli supplicio legimus interemptos" (*ibid.*).



- 82 Critics emphasize the lines that immediately follow this passage: “Men seelde him seen into wikkid deeth sterte / That pitous is, but they han cruel deeth / Often, whos crueltee cruelly sleeth” (3001–03).
- 83 Gower’s version appears in Book 7 of the *Confessio Amantis*: Gower lets his version stand as a partial contribution to the capacious topic of pity (*Confessio*, Peck ed., 7.3103–4214, esp. 3295–340) and forgoes offering contemporary resemblances. Moreover, it is not the first exemplum in Gower’s meditations on pity, as it is for Hoccleve. It is also interesting that Gower names the parties in question (King Siculus and his subject, Berillus), whereas Hoccleve keeps them anonymous and arguably more allegorical, able to gesture out to historical events and their narratives. Cf. Perkins, *Constraint and Counsel*, 104–05. Dante also refers to the brazen bull in *Inferno*; see *Dante’s Inferno*, Canto 27:1–30.
- 84 *Historia Anglicana*, 2.282; *St. Albans Chronicle*, 52. For a discussion as to why a barrel was used, see McNiven, *Heresy and Politics*, 214–15, and Strohm, *England’s Empty Throne*, 57.
- 85 The source reads: “cumque interclusi vociferarent pro poena non videretur vox humana, sed feralis” (Jacob de Cessolis, *Ludo Scachorum*, 18). The *Eulogium continuator* writes: “Qui cum comburi coepisset, clamavit dicens: ‘Miseremini, mei’ ... Clamavitque sicut prius” (*Continuatio Eulogii*, 3.417). A French translation of Jacob’s *Ludo Schachorum* says that Perillus’s cries “ne sembloit pas voix humaine mais bestial” (*Le Jeu des Eschés, Moralisé*, 155).
- 86 *Historia Anglicana*, 2.282; *St. Albans Chronicle*, 51; John Capgrave’s *Abbreuiacion of Cronicles*, 234. The account from Arundel’s register (*Concilia*, 3.325) records Badby’s occupation as a “scissoris,” which can be translated as “tailor” or “carver,” while *Chronicle of London* calls Badby a “clerk,” perhaps confusing him with William Sawtre, a minor cleric (92). See also *William Gregory’s Chronicle of London*, 105, which simply describes Badby as “an heretyke.”
- 87 Jacob de Cessolis, *Ludo Scachorum*, 17. See Perkins, *Counsel and Constraint*, 104–05, for a brief comparison between the *Regiment*, this source, and the Ovidian version. Also see my discussion below. Vignay’s translation of Cessolis’s *Ludo Scachorum* names Perillus “un ouvrier” who “ouvroit en metaux” (*Le Jeu des Eschés, Moralisé*, 155).
- 88 Scanlon is right in saying that the exemplum offers a sort of “ideological empowerment” for those in “acquiescence to the authority of Henry’s *voluntas*” (“King’s Two Voices,” 246).
- 89 See Blyth’s note to line 3102.
- 90 Perhaps the following lines, which are from the “Address to Sir John Oldcastle” and which are spoken to the mass of heretics who pervert the knight, allude to *De heretico comburendo*: “And but yee do, God I byseeche a boone / Pat in the fyr yee feele may the sore” (319–20). I read “fyr,” however, both as a synonym for hell – a definition available in Middle English; s.v. “fir,” def. 1a, *MED* – and an antonym for “boone” in line 319. Hoccleve repeats this oppositional structure later: “Remembre yow, heuene is a miry place / And helle is full of sharp aduersitee” (487–88).



- 91 A petition for mercy or pardon in a case of homicide (dated 1391), see *York Memorandum Book*, 30–31.
- 92 “In January 1413 Henry IV pardoned William Longe, then imprisoned in the Tower of London, out of his ‘reverence for one of whom he has firm hope of grace and mercy’” (Bellamy, *Crime and Public Order*, 193).
- 93 On the Privy Seal and pardons, see Tout, *Chapters*, 5.57–58, 209, and Bellamy, *Crime and Public Order*, 195. See also Hurnard, *King’s Pardon for Homicide*, 219; this book looks at earlier practices of pardon but is nonetheless illuminating in its details.
- 94 See Hoccleve, “Formulary,” 1.90–124.
- 95 *Calendar of the Patent Rolls: Henry IV, 1405–08*, 3.204; there are of course instances where “treason, murder and rape” are not pardoned; for a small selection, see 186–87, 204, 209.
- 96 *Calendar of the Patent Rolls: Henry IV, 1399–1401*, 1.190. Nicholas Wolf and John Shirley were given the same pardon “by the same writ.”
- 97 *Calendar of the Patent Rolls: Henry V, 1413–16*, 1.162. A commission dated 11 January 1414 concerns “many of the king’s subjects commonly called Lollards” and mandates that an inquiry be made of “the names of all such as have not yet been captured and arrest all whom they may find guilty in the county and imprison them until the king shall give orders for their punishment by advice of council” (*ibid.*, 1.177–78).

## JOHN LYDGATE’S EUCHARISTS

- 1 *Commentaries*, 141.
- 2 See Dymmok, *Liber Contra Duodecim Errores et Hereses Lollardorum*; Netter, *Doctrinale Antiquitatum Fidei Ecclesiae Catholicae*. Lydgate also does not issue orthodox publicity alongside the likes of, say, John Whethamstede, Abbot of St. Albans, who distinguished himself for speaking directly to and against heretics in 1426/27 and for writing an anti-Wycliffite, Latin poem. On the former activity of Whethamstede, see *Annales Monasterii*, 1.222–28. For his poem (re-edited), see Carlson, “Whethamstede on Lollardy.”
- 3 “A Defence of Holy Church,” in *Minor Poems of John Lydgate: Part I*, 30–35; Pearsall dates “Defence” to 1413 (*Bio-bibliography*, 18). This poem only refers to the Wycliffite call for ecclesiastical disendowment – “Thorough hem þat gan to threten and manace / The libertees of Cristys mansioun, / And for to pynch att her fundacioun” (38–40) – and the generalized, though by no means representative, polemic against images: “And namely hem that of presumpcyoun / Dispraven hir, and hir ornaentes, / And therwithall of indignacioun” (127–29). By way of comparison, the sixth sermon in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 649, is a much better match to Henry V’s proclaimed military zeal against the “lollards”; see Wenzel, *Latin Sermon Collections*, 371–72.
- 4 For “The Soteltes at the Coronation Banquet of Henry VI” and “Ballade to King Henry VI,” see *Minor Poems of John Lydgate: Part II*, 623–24, 624–30.

- 5 Prince Henry, the future Henry V, “had his attention drawn to Lydgate’s facility as a versifier, recognised his promise as a future Lancastrian propagandist, and perhaps saw too the possibilities for a kind of high-style religious poetry in English that would embody his own austere orthodox piety ... and preempt the claims of the Lollards on the vernacular as a language of religion” (Pearsall, *Bio-bibliography*, 18; see also 19, 20, and the section, “Lancastrian Propagandist and Laureate Poet to Crown and Commons, 1426–32,” 28–32). See also the earlier study by Schirmer, *John Lydgate*, 177, 179, 180; as well Strohm, *England’s Empty Throne*, 173–95. Somerset, in “Lydgate the ‘Poet-Propagandist’ as Hagiographer,” nuances (while maintaining) the reading of Lydgate as a propagandist; in the same collection, a similar nuancing is Straker, “Propaganda, Intentionality.” Cf. Ebin, *John Lydgate*, 113–38, who argues that Lydgate’s religious verse is formally experimental in its use of such devices as the refrain, but there is no discussion of Lydgate’s theological experimentation.
- 6 Gayk suggests that, on the question of how religious images can instruct the laity, Lydgate offers a “‘reformist’ alternative to both Lollard literalism and iconoclasm and dangerously subjective forms of affective piety” (“Images of Pity,” 202).
- 7 *John Lydgate*, 68. Pearsall’s chapter on “Lydgate’s Religious Poetry” (255–92) remains helpful.
- 8 Spearing suggests that “The retreat from Chaucer’s intellectual curiosity and courage must have been in part a consequence of the more restricted and repressive intellectual climate in which his successors lived; and here one may hypothesize that the fears aroused by the initial success of the Wycliffite heresy were of considerable importance ... The widespread fear of heresy after the opening of the fifteenth century seems to have been shared by the English Chaucerian poets” (“Father Chaucer,” 146; see also 148, 150).
- 9 See Watson, “Censorship and Cultural Change,” 826.
- 10 For a representative example of this fusion of Passion and eucharistic concerns, see Nicholas Love, *Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ*, 151–52, 224. I take the phrase, “traditional religion,” from Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars*.
- 11 Pearsall, *Lydgate*, 265; see also 275. Schirmer observes similarly: “Lydgate could not and would not continue this tradition, whereby Christ’s torments were represented as suffering capable of moving ordinary mortals” (*John Lydgate*, 184).
- 12 Rubin, *Corpus Christi*, 100. This is not to say that Lydgate does not write poems on the Passion; see, for instance, “Cristes Passioun” (*Minor Poems of John Lydgate: Part I*, 216–21), “The Fifteen Ooes of Christ” (*ibid.*, 238–50), “The Dolourous Pyte of Crystes Passioun” (250–52), and “Prayer upon the Cross” (252–54). Cornell argues that some of Lydgate’s Passion verses are ekphrastically dependent on visual images – paintings especially – “to depict the suffering of Christ” and that Lydgate, in turn, emphasizes aspects of Christ’s humanity – Christ as Knight, for instance – that probably was not represented in any given painting (“‘Purtreture’ and ‘Holsom Stories,’” 172; see 171).

13 Pearsall, *Bio-bibliography*, 31.

14 Schirmer suggests that Lydgate here “gave an explanation in verse of the meaning of the festival” (*John Lydgate*, 175). Rubin believes that “Procession” is “a report on the Corpus Christi procession as celebrated in London in the mid fifteenth century ... and organised under the auspices of the skinners’ guild” (*Corpus Christi*, 229; see also 275–76), a view shared by Lancashire, *London Civic Theatre*, 124. On Lydgate’s literary mumblings as public performances, see Nolan, *John Lydgate*.

15 This chapter is not about mercantile theology per se for the very reason that such a thing is context-specific and cannot (and should not) be generalized beyond case by case bases. I shall only take the case at hand, Lydgate’s “Procession,” and explore what it says and *how* it means, opening up a way to view this poet as a theologian responsive to circumstantial demands, whether they be the demands of source texts, of public occasions, or of patrons. Regarding the demands of source texts, I have in mind Lydgate’s translation of DeGuilleville’s *Pèlerinage*, which to my mind articulates a sacramental theology that is strikingly different from that of the “Procession.” In the former, DeGuilleville’s narrator is an expressed doubter of transubstantiation: “And off ó thyng, as I took heed, / Ther was no thyng but wyn & bred, / The wych wer nat to hys entent” (*Pilgrimage of the Life of Man*, lines 3243–45), but he is proven wrong by his own witnessing of a host miracle:

ffor ther I sawh, (as I took heed,)  
In-to Rawh fflesshē, tornyd bred;  
Grace Dieu ordeynede yt so.  
And wyn (I took good heed ther-to,)  
Was tornyd ek in-to Red blood.

(3261–65; see also 5240–49, 5342–43)

In the poem, there are further doubts and proofs – such as Nature’s objection that this miracle impossibly violates the laws of nature (“To werkē so ageyn my lore?” [3561]), and Grace’s long, but at points, blunt, response to that exception: “And I shal chaungē wyn to blood / With-oute your counsayl or your red, / And in-to Rawh flessch, ek whyt bred” [3882–84]). Suffice it to say here that Lydgate in “Procession” does not even come close to this kind of eucharistic expression.

16 Rubin, *Corpus Christi*, 242–43. Her point is worth quoting in full: “This is only to say that fraternities exhibited the variety of understandings and uses of the eucharist which we have encountered elsewhere, and that one could borrow and apply particular readings of the eucharist rather than others, and align them with the practicalities of life, politics, the contingencies mediated through local knowledge” (243).

17 Johnston, “Guild of Corpus Christi,” noting a guild’s register that “begins with a sermon on the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist” (374). The sermon is edited in *Register of the Guild of Corpus Christi*, 6–9. Also compare Lydgate’s “Procession” to the fifteenth-century translation of a work attributed

- to Aquinas in Patterson, “Hymnal from MS Additional 34193, British Museum.” For a general consideration of the hymns ascribed to Aquinas, see Szövérfy, *Die Annalen der lateinischen Hymnendichtung*, 1.248, 253–54.
- 18 On both, see Avril Henry’s editions, *Biblia Pauperum* and *Mirour of Mans Saluacioune*.
- 19 See, for instance, “On the Feast of Corpus Christi,” in *Minor Poems of the Vernon MS*, lines 267–80; *Three Middle English Sermons*, 71–72. The Pauline imperative is common in orthodox and Wycliffite writings alike; see the *Lay Folks’ Catechism*, and the Wycliffite interpolated version, in Thoresby’s *Lay Folks’ Catechism*, 66 and 67, respectively.
- 20 We can also note here that Lydgate does not assume the role of Grace in *Pilgrimage of the Life of Man*, who says “I shal the techē verrayly / The pryvyteēs, by & by, / Bothe by eydence & preff” (5213–15) in order to verify in sundry ways transubstantiation and the Real Presence of Christ’s bloody body (see 5342–58).
- 21 *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 230, my emphasis. Indeed, Peter Lombard was the subject of Lateran’s initial rulings; the Council determined resolutely on the side of Peter against Joachim of Fiore concerning the question of the [in]divisibility of divine substance as it is expressed in the Trinity – an issue out of which eucharistic concerns arise; see *ibid.*, 231–32. Bonaventure, for instance, used Peter’s *Sentences* to maintain a distinction between the sacramental sign and the signified – a distinction that was, as Aers argues, collapsed in late medieval England to the point that sign (bread) *is* the signified (Christ’s body); see *Sanctifying Signs*, 17. Bonaventure also used the *Sentences* as a foundation on which to assert that grace is not contained within the sacrament of the altar, despite the prevailing view that it is an “accident without subject.” See Bonaventure, *Opera Omnia*, 18: “Ad illud quod obiicitur, quod in Sacramento altaris manent accidentia sine subiecto, ergo similiter in aliis Sacramentis gratia; dicendum, quod non est simile: quia ibi manent accidentia et propter nostri sensus infirmitatem et propter fidei utilitatem [To that which is objected, that in the sacrament of the altar the accidents remain without subject, therefore similarly in the other sacraments grace; it must be said, that it is not similar: because there remain the accidents owing to the infirmity of our senses and on account of the utility of faith].”
- 22 Wyclif’s eucharistic theology has been assessed by Aers in *Sanctifying Signs*, 53–65. For a thoroughly argued Wycliffite model of Real Presence, see “De oblatione iugis sacrificii,” in *Works of a Lollard Preacher*, 170–72, 175, 192, 194, 196, 204–05, 209, 222–23, 240–41, 243.
- 23 See Peter Lombard, *Sententiae*, 286–89 (4.9.1–2).
- 24 *Ibid.*, 289 (4.9.3).
- 25 *Ibid.*, 296 (4.11.1.1).
- 26 *Ibid.*, 292 (4.10.1).
- 27 See *ibid.*, 304–05 (4.12.2), 299–300 (4.12.3), 305–06 (4.12.3). For Wyclif’s reference to this problem, see *De Eucharistia*, 11–13; see also item fifteen in “The Thirty-Seven Conclusions of the Lollards,” 744. Below I discuss this issue of the (in)divisible body of Christ in the eucharist.

- 28 *Sententiae*, 291 (4.10.1); see 294.
- 29 See Macy, *Treasures*, 305. For more on the Berengarian controversies as they relate to Peter Lombard, see Colish, *Peter Lombard*, 1.551–83.
- 30 *Ibid.*, 1.575. Macy refers to Peter Lombard's sacramental theology as an "ecclesiological interpretation" (*Theologies of the Eucharist*, 122).
- 31 *Sententiae*, 281 (4.8.2).
- 32 *FZ*, 158.
- 33 "For to begynne first at his merueilous Incarnacion. loo howe expresse mynde þerof is þis mete þat he ȝiueþ to vs in þe sacrament of þe awtere, for þerin is he verreyly, & in þat self body þat was so merueilously conceyuede by þe holy goste aboue kynde. And also so merueilously born of his blessedde modere Marie without sorowe or wemme of sinne ... he is verreyly & bodily present wiþ vs vnder an opere forme. bot sobely in his owne propre substance verrey god & man" (*Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ*, 223–25). Of course, Love is translating a Pseudo-Bonaventurian work, for Bonaventure's theory of reception is equally different from contemporary English orthodoxy, "stressing that the ability to appreciate the sign was paramount in experiencing Christ's body in the sacrament" (Rubin, *Corpus Christi*, 67).
- 34 *Sententiae*, 306 (4.12.3).
- 35 *Ibid.*, 307 (4.12.4).
- 36 Peter's quotation, it appears, is from Gregory the Great, *Liber Sacramentorum*, in *PL* 78:48–49. Aquinas, however, imputes the Jerome quotation to Augustine in the "Sed contra est" of IIIa, q.76. a.3; see *Summa theologiae*, 58.101. I am unsure why Peter Lombard assigns this passage to Jerome, or whether Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS Lat. 3022, has the better reading, "August." (*Sententiae*, 307n1), but there are similar passages from Jerome's work, and these I note below.
- 37 "Of the Sacrament of the Altar," in *Twenty-six Political and Other Poems*, lines 67–72, 81–93. See also "On the Feast of Corpus Christi," *Minor Poems of the Vernon MS*, lines 211–20. There is a difference between Peter Lombard's formulation of the eucharist and that presented in "Of the Sacrament of the Altar." The former does not speak of the "true body of Christ" as "flesh," but the latter does without distinguishing between the sacramental and spiritual body of Christ.
- 38 See, for instance, the miracle witnessed by a knight, Cornelius Cloyne, in *Knighon's Chronicle*, 260–63.
- 39 *Concilia*, 3.327. For a Wycliffite view on the fractioning of the host, absent the orthodox formalism that refracts Badby's utterances, see "De oblatione iugis sacrificii," in *Works of a Lollard Preacher*, 195, 196, 220, 224. For a more polemic statement, see *EWS*, 3.247–48. Those miracles within orthodox piety that seek to prove the bodily Real Presence of the host nonetheless admit the possibility that with fraction comes the breaking of Christ's body, a gesture of literal sacrifice, as relayed in one of Robert Mannyng's tales:

Byfore þe prest þat a chyld lay quyk  
Yn feyr forme of flesshe & blode ...

Whan þe prest shuld parte þe sacrament,  
 An aungel down fro heuen was sent  
 And sacryfied þe chyld ryght þare:  
 As þe prest hyt brak, þe aungel hyt share.  
 Þe blode yn þe chalys ran  
 Of þat chyld boþe god and man.

(*Robert Mannyng of Brunne: Handlyng Synne*, 251, lines 10054–62; more fully, see 246–69, lines 9899–10818). See also Tissington's handling of this question, *FZ*, 176–77.

- 40 Moreover, Jerome does not identify early Christian heresies as eucharistic heresies per se and his comments on eucharistic practice are occasional, as when he remarks that a heretical or Arian bishop cannot celebrate the eucharist; see *Altercatio*, 54 [21]. Nor does he offer a coherent proto-theory on transubstantiation as does, say, the later John Damascene; see *Exposition of the Orthodox Faith*, 83 [4.13].
- 41 Peter Lombard (*Sententiae*, 283) cites Jerome's commentary on Matthew 26.26, in which Jerome speaks about not only the prefiguration of the Last Supper in the offerings of Melchisedek in Genesis but also how by the bread and wine at the Last Supper "in veritate sui corporis et sanguinis repraesentaret" (*PL* 26:195).
- 42 There are of course other relevant Jeromian passages. On the making of Christ's body in the sacrament, see *PL* 22:1193 (Epistle 146); on the eating of Christ's body and the reception of the sacrament more generally, see *Opera Exegetica: Commentariorum in Matheum*, 251 (4.26, 26) and *PL* 22:934 (Epistle 114); for a reading of doctrine and scripture in eucharistic terms, *Opera Exegetica: Commentarius in Ecclesiasten*, 278 (3.12.13); cf. *PL* 23:1039.
- 43 *Solliciti servare unitatem spiritus in vinculo pacis. unum corpus et unus spiritus sicut vocati estis in una spe vocationis vestrae.* [Careful to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. One body, and one Spirit; as you are called in one hope of your vocation].
- 44 *Commentaries*, 166–67. For his part, Jerome devoted much energy in disputing the Arian heresy that Christ is a creature not co-eternal with the First Person, and in attacking the Manichean heresy. Lydgate's "Geyns heretykes," then, points not to Wycliffites but to the relevant Jeromian works against these earlier heresies. But it is notable that Jerome does not link up questions of Christ's humanity and divinity with those concerning the eucharist – a logical connection recognized by Hilary of Poitiers; see *De Trinitate*, 325–28 (8.13–17). It can also be noted that Hilary does not offer a model of Real Presence that is analogous to late medieval orthodox versions, but rather supplies a sacramental theology that is more amenable to Wycliffite understandings of eucharist; see my discussion of Hilary below.
- 45 "For the tunic of the Church, that is, of the body of Christ, has been woven from above and is nowhere stitched together, nor can it be ripped, indeed by enemies" (*Commentaries*, 198). See also Jerome's analysis of Ephesians 5.23[b],

- where Jerome maintains a distinction between “flesh” and “body” when the terms of church and communion are advanced: “the Church is nowhere designated ‘the flesh’” (*ibid.*, 234; see also 235).
- 46 Jerome, Homily 55 (on Psalm 145 [146]), *Homilies*, 396; Latin taken from *Tractatus siue Homiliae*, 326. On Jerome’s authorship of these homilies, see Kelly, *Jerome*, 136–37.
- 47 Lydgate might have certainly had access to the “De morte Hieronymi” (*PL* 22:274–75) in which Jerome is reported to have had a vision of Christ’s body in the eucharist, but to this he makes no allusion.
- 48 See Rubin, *Corpus Christi*, 259–71, and equally elaborately, Beckwith, *Signifying God*.
- 49 A comment on the stanza on Gregory (lines 178–84) is worthwhile. Here, Lydgate omits the most obvious sources of Gregorian and pseudo-Gregorian lore: the host miracles Mirk and Love cite involving (among other stories) a woman who denies a priest’s sacramental efficacy on the basis that she *made* the bread herself and knows what it contains – no body of Christ – but who then witnesses the Real Presence of Christ manifesting itself in the form of a bloody finger (*Mirk’s Festial*, 173–75; *Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ*, 232–33). See the earlier version ascribed to John the Deacon (*PL* 75:41–60, esp. 52–53) and that in Jacobus de Voragine, *Golden Legend*, 1.179–80. It is noteworthy, too, that Lydgate does not cite any of the host miracles that riddle the *Dialogues*. Instead, the poet cites the quickening and medicinal “bread of life” motif based in John 6 (see line 184), which at best has a Gregorian analogue in Homily VII (on Luke 2.1–14): “the place in which the Lord was born was called the ‘house of bread’, because it was truly going to come to pass that he would nourish the hearts of his chosen ones by an interior food” (*Forty Gospel Homilies*, 51). Other homilies that are potentially eucharistic are Homily XXII (*ibid.*, 169–70), XXV (196), XXVI (201).
- 50 MacCracken supplies an open-quote here without a corresponding close-quote; see *Minor Poems of John Lydgate: Part I*, 41.
- 51 Again, by translating *Pélerinage*, Lydgate knows that the question of transubstantiation – “That merveyllous mutacion, / Bred in-to flesshe, wyn in-to blood” (*Pilgrimage of the Life of Man*, lines 3280–81) – ought to be advanced in tandem with that concerning the spiritual benefits of sacramental consumption: “But swych a merveyllous dyner / Ne was neuere a-forn yseyn, / Nor neuere (that I herde seyn,) / Ne was no swych mutacyon” (3290–93).
- 52 This scriptural verse, as Macy notes, can be referred to as the “famous ‘bread of life’ passage,” so common to sacramental theology across the ages; see *Theologies of the Eucharist*, 18.
- 53 No doubt, in Augustine, an orthodox author would have a real opportunity to speak about and defend the Thomistic view of “accidents” – though Lydgate of course passes this up: “That Bread which you see on the altar, consecrated by the word of God, is the Body of Christ. That chalice, or rather, what the chalice holds, consecrated by the word of God, is the Blood of Christ. Through those accidents the Lord wished to entrust to us His Body and the



- Blood which He poured out for the remission of sins ... Behold, it is received; it is eaten; it is consumed. Is the body of Christ consumed? Is the Church of Christ consumed? Are the members of Christ consumed? God forbid!" (*Sermons*, 195–96, 198). For an argument as to why Augustine all in all eschews the term, "accidents," see Meijering's comments in *De fide et symbolo*, 133.
- 54 Augustine, *Expositions of the Book of Psalms*, in *Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, 8.485, translation modernized. Latin inserts, here and in the next quote, are from *Enarrationes in Psalmos LI–C*, 1385–86.
- 55 *Expositions of the Book of Psalms*, in *Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, 8.485–86.
- 56 *Sententiae*, 288 (4.9.2).
- 57 Lydgate's "Qwykenyng oure herte" seems to echo portions of Psalm 104.15 (103.15, now), "and that wine may cheer the heart of man. That he may make the face cheerful with oil: and that *bread may strengthen man's heart* [et vinum laetificat cor hominis ut exilaret faciem oleo et panis cor hominis confirmat]" (my emphasis), but Augustine draws this verse into a reading of the sacraments and cites the Christ as "living bread" motif from John 6.41; see Augustine on Psalm 104 [103], in *Expositions on the Book of Psalms*, in *Select Library of Nicene and post-Nicene Fathers*, 8.515, as well as in his reading of Psalm 49 [48], *ibid.*, 176. Other relevant Augustinian passages are: *ibid.*, 75 (on Psalm 34 [33]), 202–05 (on Psalm 53 [52]); and the "Second Discourse on Psalm 30," in *St. Augustine on the Psalms*, 20–21. See also Augustine, *Tractates on the Gospel of John 11–27*, 267–76 [tract 26.11–20], 284–84 [27.9], as well as *Sermon on the Mount, Harmony of the Gospels, Homilies on the Gospels*, in *Select Library of Nicene and post-Nicene Fathers*, 6.282 [sermon 7], 501–04 [sermon 81].
- 58 As to what Lydgate means by "substance," I think Augustine, as signaled in this stanza, offers an answer: "The miracles performed by our Lord Jesus Christ are indeed divine works, and incite the human mind to rise to the apprehension of God from the things that are seen. But inasmuch as He is not such a substance [substantia] as may be seen with the eyes, and His miracles in the government of the whole world and the administration of the universal creation are, by their familiar constancy, slightly regarded, so that almost no man deigns to consider the wonderful and stupendous works of God" (*Tractates on the Gospel of John 11–27*, 231 [tract 24.1]). The Latin is taken from *In Iohannis Evangelium*, *Tractatus CXXIV*, 244.
- 59 For a Wycliffite treatment of John 6, and a related analysis of Augustine's interpretation of the sacramental bread as Christ's flesh, see "De oblatione iugis sacrificii," in *Works of a Lollard Preacher*, 209, 219–21. For an orthodox reading of John 6.59 especially, see *Middle English Sermons*, 125–33, where the reading of Christ as the "bread of life" is connected to an injunction for the lay person not to question the church's teaching that the bread is "Goddess owen flesh" to be consumed (127; see also 131).
- 60 See "On the Feast of Corpus Christi," *Minor Poems of the Vernon MS*:

Pat 3if we ne ete of þulke brede  
Ne drynke his blood, vr lyf were dede ...



Leeue we as holychirche dep,  
 ffor þat I holde þe rihte fey  
 And to heuene þe nexte wey. (301–04, 316–18)

See also the host miracle (lines 130–210) involving a Jew who sees Christians eating bloody children during communion (“Vche of ow heold a child blodie, / And siþen 3e eten hit, I nul not lye” [177–78]) – with the effect here being that any perceptions of cannibalism owe to a lack of faith.

- 61 For a discussion of Aquinas’s authorship, see Rubin, *Corpus Christi*, 185–96. For the Middle English version of a hymn said to be authored by Aquinas, see “Orologium Sapientiae.”
- 62 Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, 56.29–35 [IIIa, q.60, a.8]. See also Mirk, *Instructions for Parish Priests*, 55, lines 1775–82. In light of Aquinas’s statement on the words of consecration, the stanza on Peter Comestor (201–08) emerges in an interesting light. There, Lydgate refers to Peter’s view on the exhibition of the sacrament of the altar, which was by no means orthodox, especially in the poet’s day, as it assigns greater importance to a sacramental gesture and not to the words of consecration (see Amiot, *History of the Mass*, 93). According to Peter, the moment when the priest performs the second elevation – that of the chalice – and shows it to the audience of believers, the sacramental miracle takes place. The church, in response to the Comestor’s (and Peter the Chanter’s) view, established the practice known as the elevation of the host, emphasizing the miraculous transformation in the first element, and this procedure was regulated variously (see Jungmann, *Mass of the Roman Rite*, 2.207–08). Lydgate ascribes this unorthodox gesture to Peter himself – “Holding a Chalys here in a sonne clere, / An ooste alofft glorious and comendable” (202–03) and shows a miracle to be its effect – not a eucharistic miracle but a Marian one: “Of hir compleynte with her pytous looke, / Ellas! she bought hir sones deþe to deere” (206–07).
- 63 This, of course, is not unusual, but it is worth pointing out that even Wycliffites engage in this sort of citation; they deplore Aquinas’s view on “accidents without subject” but then cite the angelic doctor favorably on other points.
- 64 “Of the Sacrament of the Altar,” in *Twenty-six Political and Other Poems*, line 104.
- 65 *Summa theologiae*, 6.61 [Ia, q.29, a.4].
- 66 *Fasciculus Morum*, 408–09.
- 67 *Summa theologiae*, 6.55 [Ia, q.29, a.3].
- 68 See especially “De Sacramentis”: “Ergo tibi ut respondeam, non erat corpus Christi ante consecrationem: sed post consecrationem dico tibi quia jam corpus est Christi. Ipse dixit, et factum est [Therefore to you I shall reply, there was no body of Christ before the consecration: but after the consecration I say to you that now there is the body of Christ. He himself spoke, and it was made]” (PL 16:440a [IV.4.16]; see also 444a–b [cap. IV.5.23]).
- 69 Presumably, Lydgate refers to Ambrose’s hymns.
- 70 *Summa theologiae*, 56.45 [IIIa, q.61, a.3]; see 15 [IIIa, q.60, a.4], 19 [IIIa, q.60, a.5], 49 [IIIa, q.60, a.3].

- 71 See Aers, *Sanctifying Signs*, 29–51, and Beckwith's important notion of "sacramental theater" in *Signifying God*, 59–71, as well as Rhode's *Poetry Does Theology*.
- 72 For a discussion of contemporary writings on these sacramental words, see Somerset, "Here, There." For an additional example, see Wenzel, *Latin Sermon Collections*, 377.
- 73 See Auerbach, "Figura" and *Mimesis*, 95–96, 73–76, 156–62.
- 74 Thoresby, *Layfolks' Catechism*, 66.
- 75 *Jack Upland*, 71, lines 390–93. Further elaboration is offered in "Upland's Rejoinder":

And I bileue þat sacred, whiche is boþe whit and rounde,  
 Is verrei Cristis body, as men shuld bileue,  
 & did to þe tyme þat Sathanas was vnbounde.  
 Þe wittnesse of þis reson is Crist & his apostles,  
 With many holi doctoures of þe thousande zere;  
 Bot þis 3e falsely forsake, with alle 3our secte or many,  
 & blynden þe puple with heresie, and leuen Goddis lawe,  
 For 3e sayen þer is Cristis body & nou3t þat sacred host.  
*Commutauerunt veritatem Dei in mendacium.* (*ibid.*, 113, lines 385–93)

- 76 *Fasciculus Morum*, 408: Wenzel's translation paraphrases: "the accidentals continue to exist in their effect in the new substance" (*ibid.*, 409). On the identity of the author, see 1.
- 77 *Jack Upland*, 99, lines 845–49.
- 78 See "The Eucharist II," in *Selections*, 115.
- 79 *Jack Upland*, 99, lines 853–61.
- 80 *Lay Folks' Catechism*, 66, line 317. See also the *Manuale sacerdotum parochialium* in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 110, fol. 170v.
- 81 *Fasciculus Morum*, 408–09.
- 82 *Chester Mystery Cycle*, 257, lines 71–72.
- 83 *Minor Poems of the Vernon MS*, 226–27.
- 84 *Selections*, 111. For a favorable orthodox treatment of Hilary, see Thomas Winterton's tract in *FZ*, 199, 200.
- 85 *Sententiae*, 289 (4.9.3).
- 86 *Works of a Lollard Preacher*, 195.

#### MARGERY KEMPE'S "LOLLARD" SHAME

- 1 *Being and Nothingness*, 302.
- 2 References to Kempe's work are from Windeatt's edition, *The Book of Margery Kempe*, and are cited parenthetically by page number; here, 122 and 314n5641.
- 3 See especially Staley, *Dissenting Fictions*, and Nissé [Shklar], "Cobham's Daughter."
- 4 Four books have especially guided my thinking on the topic of shame: Schneider, *Shame, Exposure, and Privacy*; Williams, *Shame and Necessity*;

- Widening Scope of Shame*, ed. Lansky and Morrison; and Ahmed, *Cultural Politics of Emotion*. A collection of essays that deals with affect and includes the Middle Ages is: *Grief and Gender, 700–1700*.
- 5 The term “mysticism” may strike some as airy, and those readers can be referred to de Certeau’s *Mystic Fable* for pertinent observations.
  - 6 Indeed, as we shall see below, if one is an incorrigible heretic, he or she may still suffer a violent death.
  - 7 See Simon Forde’s entry on Repingdon in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 46.503–05. See also Emden, *Biographical Register*, 3.1565–67. Repingdon’s will is in *Register of Henry Chichele*, 2.285–87.
  - 8 These binaries can also be regarded as a subset of the topic of hypocrisy, as implied elsewhere, “In fayth, sche menyth not wyth hir hert as sche seyth with hir mowthe” (235).
  - 9 “Reading the Book of Margery Kempe,” 33. Perhaps this particular association of style with dissent is predictable; as Beckwith explains, Kempe’s “extravagant externalization and display of the very signs of her special election have meant that she has often been associated with the very ‘outward’ aspects of religiosity that were at the core of later protestant critique and redefinition” (*Christ’s Body*, 80).
  - 10 *Ghostly Sights*, 63.
  - 11 Nissé [Shklar], “Cobham’s Daughter,” 288; see also 285–88, 293, 298. My analysis below of how Kempe assumes the affective strategies of “lollard” typologies amplifies Nissé’s claim that she makes “Lollardy ... work for her” (278). On previous histories of criticism, see Beckwith, “A Very Material Mysticism,” 36–41, and “Problems of Authority,” 176–79; Aers, “The Making of Margery Kempe: Individual and Community,” in *Community, Gender, and Individual Identity*, 74–75.
  - 12 *Dissenting Fictions*, 150; see also 128, 146, 147.
  - 13 A great reading of Kempe’s vocality and crying is Cohen’s, “The Becoming-Liquid of Margery Kempe,” in *Medieval Identity Machines*, 154–87.
  - 14 *Knighton’s Chronicle*, 304–05; see 290–91.
  - 15 On Kempe’s tears, see Lochrie, *Translations of the Flesh*, 118–27.
  - 16 s.v. “despite,” *MED*, definition 1.
  - 17 Kempe follows a similar logic to Clanvowe’s, “he wole worsshipe hem in heuene” (*The Two Ways*, in *Works*, lines 513–14), when God utters: “Dowtyr, this plesith me rith wel, for the mor schame and mor despite that thu hast for my lofe, the mor joy schalt thu have wyth me in hevyn” (338). Below we shall see precisely how Kempe incorporates into her “lollard” travails this Christian commonplace about earthly suffering translating into heavenly joy.
  - 18 The gloss on this verse confirms: “Wonder see not, þouȝ synneris dispis ȝou and clepe ȝou lolleris, for louynge of Cristis gospel” (fols. 61v–62r; Hunt, 2.341).
  - 19 *Lanterne of Lizt*, 12; repunctuated.
  - 20 Cited by line number.
  - 21 *Fyve Wyttes*, 19.
  - 22 s.v. “shāme”; *MED*, definition 1.

- 23 See Thomson, *Later Lollards*, 23. Usually, after a suspect has been questioned over several days, and it is established through the evidence of depositions and the defendant's own confession that he or she is a heretic, a bishop will issue formal charges, at which point recantation (if the person is not a relapse) will take place. The form of recantation typically follows the form of the charges.
- 24 Penances for heretics can be, for the most part, typified. For a broad classification of penances, see Thomson, *Later Lollards*, 188, 231–36; for exceptions, see Tanner, "Kentish Lollards," 234. The penitent will in some cases make an offering to a particular shrine or image, especially if his or her heresies involved the renunciation of the veneration of images. In yet others, he or she will be flogged (*ibid.*). On William Swynderby's penance – he had to proclaim between masses on feast days that he once held or taught errors and heresies – see *Knighton's Chronicle*, 315.
- 25 See *Lollards of Coventry*, 11, 80, 163.
- 26 See Tanner, "Kentish Lollards," 237, 240.
- 27 *Ibid.*, 235–37. Such a badge indicates in the present an identity of the past. As McSheffrey and Tanner show, penance was "directed towards the public acknowledgment of the convicted person's recantation," and often such public acts were made to instill fear in the witnesses (*Lollards of Coventry*, 7) – this, presumably, as a means to prevent further heresies. When a suspect admits to renouncing heresy long before ever being interrogated, he or she will be compelled to abjure anyway (see *ibid.*, 13, 150–52).
- 28 Tanner, "Kentish Lollards," 249.
- 29 And, ironically, part of this effort to remember the penitent's heretical past was to encourage a kind of public forgetting – in the case of one penitent, a priest was "moved to a cure where his parishioners would not know of his past, but where the authorities could keep an eye on him" (Thomson, *Later Lollards*, 54; see 79, 80, 174). Also, of course, in most instances, a person's former heresies are recorded in a court book (though, again, there are cases where suspects admit to having been a heretic in earlier days; see Tanner, "Kentish Lollards," 233).
- 30 See *Select Cases on Defamation*, xxii–xxiv. On the traditional denotations of "slander" from pastoral rhetoric, see Craun, *Lies, Slander, and Obscenity*, 78–80.
- 31 See, for instance, *FZ*, 275, 310, 334, 335, 337.
- 32 *Heresy Trials*, 56; see also the Latin form, 79.
- 33 See Matthew, *English Works of Wyclif*, 5, 9, 87, 88, 124, 133, 134–35, 184, 211, 237, 243, 246, 261. It is worth noting that the English sermons edited by Hudson and Graddon are not as obsessed with the discourse of shame as are the polemic tracts. Furthermore, as the editors of the sermons remark in their analysis of the theme of persecution in the sermon cycle itself, "The identity of those persecuted is never under discussion, though *trewe men* are incidentally mentioned as the recipients" (*EWS*, 4.173). On reverse accusation in orthodox and heterodox discourse of sodomy (not shame or slander), see Dinshaw, *Getting Medieval*, 95–99, 152–56.
- 34 See, respectively, Matthew, *English Works of Wyclif*, 249, 29, 138, 144–45, 168, 257, 120–21, 258, 167.

- 35 *Ibid.*, 74.
- 36 *Ibid.*, 256; see 257.
- 37 *Ibid.*, 101.
- 38 See *Scale of Perfection*, lines 411–14.
- 39 See *Angela of Foligno: Complete Works*, 124–29, 131, 136, 142, 180, 192, 199, 219. Porete advises in her *Mirror of Simple Souls*: “Ista Anima, dicit Amor, non habet sollicitudinem, non habet uerecundiam, non habet honorem, non habet paupertatem, non habet diuitias, non habet gaudium, non habet tristitiam, non habet amorem, non habet odium, non habet infernum, non habet paradysum [This soul, says Love, has no anxiety, neither shame nor honor, poverty nor riches, joy nor sadness, love nor hate, hell nor paradise]” (*Speculum simplicium animarum*, 25 [cap. VII], my emphasis; see also 19 [cap. 4] and 55 [cap. 13]). The account of Christina of Markyate’s life does not elevate her experiences of shame toward a principle uttered by Christ and embraced by the mystic, as in Kempe’s *Book*, and rather shows how Christina seeks ultimately to shun the world of shame; see *Life*, 38, 43, 59, 67, 75, 87, 131. Of the many references to shame in Bridget’s *Liber Celestis*, most equate shame with sin, and only one passage parallels the numerous examples of shameful love and comfort in Kempe’s *Book*: “For shame and paciens þat one hase for þe loue of God coloures wele þe saule” (*Liber Celestis*, 437; cf. 9, 25, 31, 34, 36, 41, 49, 57, 60, 106, 112, 126, 146, 157, 170, 219, 248, 249, 274, 277, 317, 321, 322, 325, 339, 398, 401, 408, 411, 442, 468, 480, 491).
- 40 *Psalter*, 23–24, 28, 74, 77, 109, 119, 122, 126–27, 133, 160, 161, 235, 239, 241–42, 247, 250, 267, 305, 345, 392, 411, 417, 447. One exception can be found on page 246 concerning how detractors “shamand with thaire bakbityngis that ... make me ioy as thai lufid me.”
- 41 Interestingly, Kempe describes how one of the priests who penned the *Book* renewed his faith in her after reading the life of Mary of Oignies; see 292. A Middle English life of Mary of Oignies is one of four texts contained in “Prosalegenden: Die Legenden des MS Douce 114,” 134–84. The life attributed to Elizabeth of Hungary has obvious parallels to Kempe’s *Book*, including ecstatic sobbing, a drive toward spiritual “comfort” and “meekness” (which I read as “humilitas” rather than “shame”); see *Two Middle English Translations*, 60, 64, 70, 72, 78, 80, 82, 88, 94.
- 42 Rolle, in such works as “The Form of Living,” “*Ego Dormio*,” “The Commandment,” and his lyrics, equates shame with the sins of the world; see *Richard Rolle: Prose and Verse*, 7, 11, 31, 36, 44, 59. The text referred to by the editor as “Meditation B” offers a series of thanks to Christ for brooking on behalf of believers shame, reproof, slander, and humiliation; see 71, 72, 75, 76, 77.
- 43 “Al þet 3e eauer doð of god, al þet 3e þolieð, is ow martirdom i se derf ordre ... Ah þe þe is o rode ant haved blisse þrof, he wendeð scheome to menske ant wa into wunne, ant ofearneð for- þi hure over hure. Pis beoð þeo þe neauer ne beoð gleade iheortet bute hwen ha þolieð sum wa oðer sum scheome wið Iesu on his rode” (*Ancrene Wisse*, 132, 134).

- 44 For a different exploration of Kempe's relation to her predecessors, see Dickman, "Margery Kempe and the Continental Tradition of the Pious Woman"; Dillon, "Holy Women and their Confessors or Confessors and their Holy Women? Margery Kempe and Continental Tradition"; Kerby-Fulton, *Books under Suspicion*, 247–50, 256–60.
- 45 For a reading of Kempe's use of "lollard" that to my mind empties out the contemporary meanings discussed above, see Kerby-Fulton, *Books under Suspicion*, 254.
- 46 A similar event happens near the beginning of Chapter 62, where a friar erupts: "'Yyf I here any mor thes materys rehersyd, I schal so smytyn the nayl on the hed,' he seyde, 'that it schal schamyn alle hyr mayntenowys!'" (292).
- 47 s.v. "vileine," *MED*, definitions 3 and 4.
- 48 On other tactics involving Wycliffite, discursive reversals, see Barr, *Signes and Sothe*, 98–122.
- 49 Also, recanted heretics, as a condition of their penance, were required to take an oath promising to report heresies held by others.
- 50 See also 258, where "men callyd hir a 'Loller,' and women cam rennyng owt of her howsys wyth her rokkys [distaffs], crying to the pepil, 'Brennyth this fals heretyk.'" As the narrative moves to Beverly, the association between "lollardy" and shame is maintained, as well as the anti-feminist message about a "woman's place": a man advises Kempe, "Damsel, forsake this lyfe that thu hast, and go spynne and carde as other women don, and suffyr not so meche schame and so meche wo" (*ibid.*). What is meant to be understood here, then, is not how Kempe is a "lollard" or a quasi "lollard" so much as how the observation is always embedded within the discourse of slander and shame. For a nonetheless persuasive reading of Kempe's anticlerical tale of a shitting bear, and how it bears on Wycliffite subject matters, see Staley, *Dissenting Fictions*, 120.
- 51 The reach and abilities of that apparatus are aptly documented by Strohm in *England's Empty Throne*, 63–86.
- 52 The "eld monk . . . had ben tresowrer wyth the Qwen whyl he was in seculer clothynge, a riche man, and gretly dred of mech pepyl" (93; see also the editor's remarks, n864).
- 53 For sche wyst ryght wel sche had synned gretly ayens God and was worthy more schame and sorwe than ony man coud don to hir, and dyspite of the world was the ryght way to-hevyn-ward, sythen Cryst hymself ches that way. Alle hys apostlys, martyres, confessorys, and virgynes, and alle that evyr comyn to hevyn, passed be the ey of tribulacyon, and sche desyryd nothyng so mech as hevyn. (65; see 115–16)
- 54 Kempe dismounted a horse, "hyly thankynge God that sche was not brent" (240).
- 55 *Ibid.*, 276–77.
- 56 Such passages seem to have been forgotten in Meech's claim that Kempe "was also fond of considering herself a martyr" (*Book of Margery Kempe*, 273 n32/17; see also 85n29, 30n8).

- 57 Rolle, *Psalter*, 167; see 130, 244, 313, 403, 436, 482. See also the associated references concerning perfection: 4, 16, 19, 22, 24, 25, 28, 45, 51, 54, 56, 110, 131, 141, 149, 162, 194, 198, 213, 229, 235, 237, 252–53, 266, 310, 361, 432, 452, 465. See also Kempe's reputation as a "parfyt woman" (262).
- 58 "God is lufid perfytly when oure will is noght stird in pyne or persecucioun" (*Psalter*, 403).
- 59 See Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 288, fols. 3ra, 17va, 55va, 56rb, 56va, 57rb, 70ra, 94rb, 216rb, 217ra. On the manuscripts of the Wycliffite Psalters, see Kuczynski, "Rolle Among the Reformers." Worthy of note, furthermore, is the distinguishing feature of one of these Psalters, which is split between two books, London, Lambeth Palace, MS 34, and London, British Library, MS Royal 18 C.xxxvi: there is a concerted focus on the condition of the persecuted, a theme that connects neatly with Rolle's version of the penitential self. See Hudson, *Premature Reformation*, 259n166, 263–64.
- 60 See, for instance, Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Donc.c.13 (see *EWS*, 1.87–88; Hudson, *Premature Reformation*, 426, 428), Cambridge, Sidney Sussex College, MS 74 (see *EWS*, 1.71–72, 87; Spencer, "Fortunes of a Lollard Sermon Cycle"; *Premature Reformation*, 426), Cambridge, Trinity College, MS B.14.38 (see *ibid.*, 424).
- 61 See *English Text of the Ancrene Riwe* [*Acrene Wisse*]. See von Nolcken's analysis of this multiply redacted version in Cambridge, Magdalene College, MS Pepys 2498, in "Recluse and its Readers"; and Hanna's chapter on this manuscript in *London Literature*, 148–221 (here called "Acrene Riwe").
- 62 On such protocols, see Aston, "Bishops and Heresy," in *Faith and Fire*, 73–93.
- 63 *FZ*, 309–11; see 310.
- 64 *FZ*, 290.
- 65 A vernacular rendition of this text is in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 647, fol. 70r. *FZ*, 319–25, contains a different version, in Latin, responding to the conclusions listed in *FZ*, 277–82, confessing: "submittimus nos humiliter correctioni reverendi patris et domini domini [*sic*] archiepiscopi Cantuariensis et totius Angliæ primatis, et omnium aliorum, quorum interest sic errantes corrigere" (*FZ*, 319). The locations of the posting of the said document are named in Courtenay's register; *Concilia*, 3.165. See Hudson, "Some Aspects of Lollard Book Production," in *Lollards and Their Books*, 183. For a full assessment of Bodley 647, see Hanna, "Two Lollard Codices and Lollard Book-Production," in *Pursuing History*, 48–59.
- 66 It is further interesting that there is no record of Repingdon performing penance; there is only his recantation at the Oxford convocation in November; see *Concilia*, 3.172–73. Missing also is a letter of restitution in Reg. Courtenay, fol. 34r (cited in Hudson, "A Neglected Wycliffite Text," in *Lollards and Their Books*, 59n77). There are two other marginal notes here, as Hudson indicates: "Respice quaestiones dampnatas in quaterno de heresibus contentas," "Respice litteras restitutionis magistri Johannis Ayshton in octauo folio quaterni de heresibus contentas." The sympathetic annotator clearly was referring to Repingdon as a bishop, a "domini" (Aston remains a "magister").



- For Aston's restitution, which would be presumably similar to Repingdon's, see *Concilia*, 3.169.
- 67 *Ibid.*, 3.202–03.
- 68 See McFarlane's discussion of this document, in *John Wycliffe*, 113.
- 69 See Hudson, *Premature Reformation*, 73–76.
- 70 *FZ*, 313; see 312–14.
- 71 *Knighton's Chronicle*, 439–41.
- 72 *Three Middle English Sermons*, 65.
- 73 Interestingly, the chronicler, Adam Usk, omits Repingdon's name from the letter he purportedly wrote to Henry IV. On this letter, see Grady, "The Lancastrian Gower and the Limits of Exemplarity," 552–55; as noted and discussed in Strohm, *England's Empty Throne*, 259n3; see also 175–80. There are two other copies of this letter, one of which names Philip Repingdon, Abbot of Leicester: London, British Library, MS Stowe 67, fols. 67r–70; another is in *Official Correspondence of Thomas Bekynton*, 1.151–54. Walsingham barely sketches portraits of the early Wycliffites but, as expected, gives most of the attention to Hereford and Repingdon, the latter a "quidam canonicus Leycestrie" (*Historia Anglicana*, 2.57), who preached against all the orders but his own, the Austin Canons. Walsingham, however, does not maintain his silence about Repingdon and mentions him later, explicitly.
- 74 See Martin's remarks in *Knighton's Chronicle*, xliii; and his "Wyclif, Lollards, and Historians, 1384–1984," 239–40.
- 75 *Knighton's Chronicle*, 276. Knighton had before him a task a bit different from skirting "embarrassment in approaching the subject of his fellow-canon Philip Repingdon" (Martin, in *ibid.*, 276n1).
- 76 Knighton assigns Repingdon no colorful persona, like the indignant Hereford, or the hermit Swynderby, but merely a set of opinions: "Opinions of another whom I heard preach" (*ibid.*, 283). Repingdon lingers in the margins of Knighton's text to such an extent that this Wycliffite's ready recantation of October 1382 and full restoration (*Concilia*, 3.169), his accession to high office, is by-passed, left out of the "lollard" history. Nor, incidentally, does he comment on Hereford's role of assessor in the trial of Walter Brut in 1393; see *Register of John Trefnant*, 359, 394, 401.
- 77 This is Hudson's comment in her edition of Thorpe and Taylor (*Two Wycliffite Texts*, 113). Other examples of leniency have been found by McFarlane concerning the cases of Robert Hook and John Barton; see *Lancastrian Kings*, 217–18. See also Hudson, *Premature Reformation*, 35, 164.
- 78 Clopper, however, finds that the compilation is a Wycliffite one (though he suggests that some of its texts are fraternal in origin); see "Franciscans, Lollards," 184 and n28.
- 79 Hereford was also attacked for turning against Wycliffism in a document contained in *Register of John Trefnant*, 394–96.
- 80 "bi þe present doynge of Filip Repingtoun, þat is now bicomē bishop of Lyncolne, I am now lerned, as many oþer ben and manye mo heraftir þoruȝ



- Goddis grace schulen be lerned, to hate and to fleen al such sclandre þat pese forseid men [Repingdon, “Nycol Herforde, ... Ioon Purueye, ... Robert Bowland”] cheeffli haue defouliden wiþ principali hemsilf” (“Testimony,” 39).
- 81 *Ibid.*, 42.
- 82 During Repingdon’s 1413 visitation to Leicester, a Wycliffite suspect, John Belgrave, was recorded “dicens de episcopo moderno quod contravenit predicacionibus per ipsum olim factis” (Crompton, “Leicestershire Lollards,” 40 [item 5]). Belgrave expresses a view some three decades in the making, and one repeated in a moniker for the bishop, “Rampington” (Wordsworth, *Ecclesiastical Biography*, 1.277n; discussed by Forde, “Writings of a Reformer,” 39–40). On Repingdon’s sermons or, more properly, “scholarly exposition[s] of the Sunday gospels,” see also Wenzel, *Latin Sermon Collections*, 51; more fully, 50–53, 199–202, 203–06, 381. For a recent assessment of Repingdon’s visitation to Leicestershire, see Forrest, “Anti-Lollard Polemic.”
- 83 Repingdon’s register contains no record of Kempe’s visit, as first acknowledged by Meech (*Book of Margery Kempe*, 274n33) and seconded most recently by Staley (*Dissenting Fictions*, 60n50). The editor of the register explains that it was at the clerk’s discretion as to which interviews and proceedings were recorded (see *Register of Bishop Philip Repingdon*, 1–ii), so perhaps the omission of the visit is a result of scribal selectivity, though it is interesting to speculate further that, if Kempe’s reputation in England was what she says it was, a scribe would fail to see the importance of recording this encounter.
- 84 For a different assessment of Kempe’s “citationality,” see Cohen, “The Becoming-Liquid of Margery Kempe,” in *Medieval Identity Machines*, 160–61.
- 85 For two interesting analyses of why Kempe seeks to wear white, see Dinshaw, *Getting Medieval*, 145; and Warren, *Spiritual Economies*, 94.
- 86 This discursive method is also instanced in Bridget of Sweden’s *Liber Celestis*; see 195, 198, 216, 255, 450.
- 87 See also *Liber Celestis*, 113, 127.
- 88 On metacommentary, see Fredric Jameson, “Metacommentary,” 10.
- 89 Meech writes: “The criticism of Bishop Repyngdon voiced by Margery after his refusal to give her the mantle and the ring may have been a just one ... Repyngdon, after being a notorious supporter of Wyclif and his doctrines at Oxford, abjured his heresies 18 Nov., 1382, when pressure had been brought to bear upon him, and was thereafter not only a strictly orthodox churchman, but a persecutor of Lollards” (*Book of Margery Kempe*, 273–74n33/24–25). More recently, Nissé [Shklar] writes of this passage: “Throughout their encounter, Kempe plays on the glaring irony of Repingdon’s status as a notable ex-Lollard ... Kempe’s request challenges Repingdon to take a stand on dangerous issues of gender and obedience ... [Repingdon’s refusal] can be read as a comment not only on his unwillingness to grant Kempe’s request despite his own beliefs in her favor but on his earlier politically motivated repudiation of Wycliffism in 1382 as well; in these subversive terms, Repingdon represents a church hierarchy that in obeying its own laws of orthodoxy fails to obey Christ” (“Cobham’s Daughter,” 289, 290). My reading

does not negate these, obviously, but my emphasis is on what Repingdon's identity *is* in the real time of Kempe's narrative, and not solely what Repingdon *was*. Moreover, I emphasize the links between this episode and other devotional imperatives expressed throughout the *Book*, as will be clear below.

- 90 Meech, *Book of Margery Kempe*, 273n32/17; see also 262n16/34–35.
- 91 There are plenty of references to the writing of the work, and to its often haphazard form of organization, but none equal to Repingdon's advice.
- 92 While Arundel was notorious in his efforts to restrict religious writing in English by way of his Provincial Constitutions, he had a favorable attitude towards affective piety – a conclusion evidenced not only in his endorsement of Nicholas Love's translation of a pseudo-Bonaventurian work, *Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ*, but also in his patronage of Mount Grace, the location where a scribe declares the collective ownership of the *Book*: "Liber Montis Gracie. This boke is of Mountegrace" (Meech, ed., *Book of Margery Kempe*, 1). On Arundel's association with Mount Grace, see Sargent, "Transmission by the English Carthusians of Some Late Medieval Spiritual Writings"; Watson, "Censorship and Cultural Change," 854.
- 93 I am putting a finer point on a claim made by Ashley: "If Margery encounters resistance from one churchman, she is able to find another who supports her" ("Historicizing Margery," 375).
- 94 See Staley's chapter, "Authorship and Authority," in *Dissenting Fictions*, 1–38. Nissé [Shklar] puts it well: Kempe "accords herself and her scribes the power reserved by the church of documenting legal processes in official registers" ("Cobham's Daughter," 279).
- 95 We ought not think of Repingdon's advice that Kempe produce a work of vernacular theology as inappropriate in the age of Arundel's Constitutions. For while the best (and in some sense, only) modern critic of Repingdon has indicated that "there is no evidence that Repygndon resorted to the vernacular in an attempt to gain more widespread support" (Forde, "Writings of a Reformer," 138), there is a neglected vernacular commentary on the decalogue attributed to Repingdon in London, British Library, MS Cotton Vespasian A.xiii (fols. 107r–115v): "expliciunt mandata expositio secundum magistrum Philippum quondam abbatem de Leycistria" (fol. 115v). A version of this commentary is also present in British Library, MS Harley 2250, and Cambridge University Library, MS Kk.i.3.
- 96 *Mystic and Pilgrim*, 120. This kind of reading is paradigmatic in Kempe criticism, and I am allowing Atkinson's remarks to stand as the representative example.

#### HERESY, WYCLIFFISM, AND ENGLISH LITERARY HISTORY

- 1 "Improbatio quippe haeticorum facit eminere, quid ecclesia tua sentiat et quid habeat sana doctrina. Oportuit enim et haereses esse, ut probati manifesti fierent inter infirmos" (*Confessiones*, 109 [7.19.25]).
- 2 Ehrman, *Lost Christianities*.

- 3 “pravitatum hæreseos sapientes” (Walsingham, *Historia Anglicana*, 1.346).
- 4 *De Veritate Sacrae Scripturae*, 3.278.
- 5 See Boyarin, *Border Lines*; for later events and texts, Maisonneuve, *Études sur les origines de l’Inquisition*, 29–91.
- 6 See Bauer, *Orthodoxy and Heresy*.
- 7 For “The Simonie,” see *Medieval English Political Writings*, 193–212.
- 8 This boom was described by Doyle and Parkes in “Production of Copies” (198, 199, 200, 201), and subsequently supported by a host of other scholars.
- 9 I could not agree more strongly with Hanna’s assessment that critical “efforts to set Lollardy to one side of Middle English literary endeavors, as a religious extremism, may misrepresent” (*London Literature*, 311) the historical significance of Wycliffism in the making of English literary history.
- 10 See Kerby-Fulton, *Books under Suspicion*.
- 11 See Simpson, *Reform and Cultural Revolution*.
- 12 See Kerby-Fulton, *Books under Suspicion*, 188–204.
- 13 Clopper, “Franciscans, Lollards.”
- 14 See Spencer, *English Preaching*, and Ghosh, *Wycliffite Heresy*.
- 15 See “The Plowman’s Tale,” in *Six Ecclesiastical Satires*; “The Ploughman’s Tale” (Oxford, Christ Church, MS 152, fols. 228v–231r), in *“Canterbury Tales”: Fifteenth-Century Continuations*. On the inclusion of “Jack Upland” within a 1602 edition of Chaucer, see *Jack Upland*, 1–6. For various statements through the centuries about the Wycliffite Chaucer, see *Chaucer: The Critical Heritage*, 1.108, 166, 178–79, 315; 2.52, 53, 127–27, 337–54.
- 16 On Foxe and Gough, see *Jack Upland*, 5–6n1.
- 17 Hudson speculates on this connection in “Conclusion: The Premature Reformation?” in *Premature Reformation*, 508–17.

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